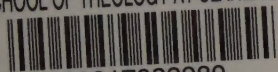
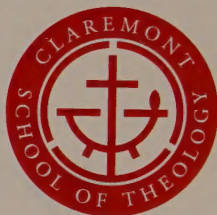


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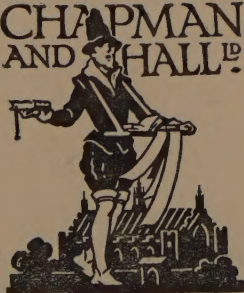
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THE STORY OF WOMAN

BY
W. L. GEORGE

CHAPMAN
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LONDON: MCMXXV

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THE STORY OF WOMAN

CHAPTER I

THE PREHISTORIC WOMAN

I.—Introductory

THE reader, when perusing these chapters, is requested to bear in mind the difficulty involved in the compression, the fore-shortening of the complete history of woman. It is desired to indicate the course which has been followed by woman's mentality and woman's status from the first reflective "ape" to Madame Curie.

It follows that the writer finds himself between two perils. He may lose himself in a mass of details which do not affect the development of the female mind; or, on the other hand, he may ignore the atmosphere of the period he considers, and thus he may omit much that is necessary if the evolution of woman is to be clearly figured.

It has therefore been found necessary to indicate, if only on broad lines, the general condi-

tions in which woman found herself, giving her so far as possible the cynosural position; and especially to attempt to show not only woman's situations throughout the ages, but the *relationships* between those situations. That is to say, the main object is not to give a full picture of the prehistoric woman and another full picture of, let us say, Marie Antoinette: it is to show how the position of woman compares from epoch to epoch, and in what manner the status of women was raised. The reader should remember that for many thousands of years, almost up to the present day, any study of the situation of women is a study of love, marriage, and child-bearing; his patience is craved while the development of the economic and political side of woman is led up to. At the same time, it will be clearly brought out that the intellectual revolt of woman is no new thing, and that we must seek it far back, in Greece, at Rome, and perhaps in dimmer regions of human history.

II.—The Neolithic World

The history of mankind is a long one. Its beginnings we merely glimpse, and it is

impossible here to examine the growth of early man, which Mr. H. G. Wells has so ably summarized in *The Outline of History*. It is enough to say that we do not now believe that man sprang from what we to-day call an ape; or if so it was a lofty ape. Mankind originated differently from the ape, and it is presumable that at a certain time, say, 40,000 years ago, there were various kinds of apes and perhaps various kinds of men. Conditions killed some, conditions favoured others, and it is from the favoured human stem that we all spring.

In those remote days woman, equally with man, was a sort of animal; there existed probably as much difference between them as there exists to-day between the tiger and the tigress. That period is full of uncertainty. We have far to go before we reach a point where there is a woman question, where man is conscious of woman rather than the male conscious of the female. For that reason we must consider a comparatively recent prehistoric time which is called the neolithic period, said to have begun 12,000 years ago. Before that time the world knew men. It knew men of a fairly advanced type as long ago as 25,000 years. That is the paleolithic period, of which we find some traces. Mr. Wells thinks

that these people may have tamed the horse, but no other domestic animals; that they knew how to draw and to paint fairly well; that they buried their dead with ornaments, food, and weapons, and therefore had some vague idea either of immortality or of non-death; that they had very good flint weapons, notably spears; that they could trim a lamp stocked with fat; that they were a hunting people, but knew nothing of cultivation, that they had neither pottery nor buildings, but perhaps only huts of skin.

Obviously, in a society so primitive, we cannot estimate the proper position of woman. We are better placed in the neolithic period, of which we know more. Here, 12,000 years ago, we find human beings who had domesticated animals, dogs, cattle, sheep, goats, pigs. Mr. Wells considers that they certainly tilled the soil and raised wheat, though they still lived largely by hunting and fishing. At last man had invented the bow and arrow; he had polished stone tools and weapons, axes with handles. He knew how to weave flax. He made nets. He had pottery. Mainly he lived in lake dwellings. His language was brief; he thought mainly when an object created an idea in his mind. He was terrified by the old man of the tribe, the chief, who owned

all the women. From the prohibition to touch the women originated the taboos.

To this brilliant analysis by Mr. Wells the writer may add that man at that time presumably discovered vegetables, as the dog discovered the value of grass. He must also have known salt, for herds of deer to-day travel a long way to lick the natural deposits. He may have taken salt separately from food, like a medicine. Apart from the animals mentioned above, the reindeer and the ox were present, and there must have been smaller animals. In those days man ate anything that he could kill.

III.—Love

In the middle of a small lake, perhaps in Minnesota, perhaps in Switzerland, stood a lake dwelling. A number of huts communicating with each other clustered upon a platform, set upon piles, and were connected with the shore by a bridge; the floor of this bridge could be removed at night, so that the inmates might sleep without fear of wild beasts or human raiders. A few canoes, trunks of wood hollowed out by fire, were moored to the piles by thongs

of leather. It was morning, and upon the fire, which was never allowed to go out because fire was difficult to make, pieces of meat upon a spit were being roasted by the women. Krif, old man of the tribe, watched them, a long spear upon his shoulder, and, ready to his hand, a club, with which to chastise lazy women or to drive away a greedy child that might venture to dip its fingers into the falling fat.

Krif was the only grown man in the dwelling. He was very tall and muscular. His light brown skin was sunburnt and matted with black hair where mingled a little grey. He wore his hair long, plaited into fantastic shapes, decorated with shells and dried red berries. His face and body were tattooed with variations of his totem. He sat negligent and watchful while his squaws toiled. These women, perhaps half a dozen full-grown, and a number of children, boys and girls, all nude, circulated about the dwelling. The women wore only decorative fringes taken from animals, and hair ornaments devised by themselves. While two turned the heavy spit, one sat cross-legged repairing a net. Another renewed the haft of a spear. Yet another, with a forked branch, swept up the entrails of an animal eaten the night before, and threw them

out into the lake. The elder children, sharp flints in their small hands, endlessly polished the stones to make blades or the heads of axes. Over all this labour Krif, mighty hunter, master of all, let fall an indolent gaze. He was pre-occupied by hunger, and he sniffed greedily the roast meat. Tolerantly he watched two little children, a boy and a girl. The boy with a small stick was pretending to hunt the little girl, who impersonated an otter. They were making believe. At a certain moment the boy jabbed the girl too hard, but she did not cry. She flew at him like a little savage animal, clawing at his face. Krif laughed as they rolled about. He was man. He could laugh, make a sound which no beast could utter. He watched for a moment the girl Seil, who separated the two children, striking each with her clenched fist until they howled and ran away. He realized that Seil was pleasing. She was tall for her years, about thirteen, slender, but woman already. Her curly black hair framed an oval face, with small features and dark, laughing eyes. Krif made a sound to which at once Seil responded, coming towards him, head bent. Krif was not in a savage mood. He took her arm in one hand,

inspected it, looked at Seil with a sudden light in his eyes. At that moment the elder women unhooked the spit and placed the meat upon a plate of baked clay. Krif forgot Seil; bending down towards the meat, he began to carve for himself, thrusting fragments into his mouth. All the children had come in, and with the women waited until the chief should have eaten enough.

Seil did not always have work to do. Sometimes there were no stones to polish and she was just too young to be employed in hollowing out a trunk or fishing. She went out upon the platform, looking over the lake where a little blue mist hung along the trees. It was soft and warm. She felt happy. She did not know why. Then she conceived a desire to play with her sister Nurga. She was called Nurga because she was so fat, just as Seil drew her name from her capacity to swim like a fish. Nurga was very regular in her habits. An hour after a meal she was always found in the women's hut. Seil called her. There was no reply. It did not occur to Seil that Nurga might not be within. She concluded that Nurga refused to answer. Seil could not conceive absence or presence. A thing was, or it

was not. So she went along the drawbridge to the shore. She was rather frightened there, for she knew that men might carry her away. But she had lost the red berries which she liked to twine in her hair. She liked red berries for herself, and when they were upon her head she felt elevated.

The days passed. Krif was busy hunting, for the fishing had been unfortunate of late, and a wild ox which he had speared found strength enough to drown in the lake, his body irrecoverable. Seil had understood the contact of Krif. Her time had come to enter the women's hut and become one of Krif's wives. The idea bred in her neither resentment or repulsion. She was too familiar with birth and death to have curiosities. As for Krif, he was what he was, the chief, not only who must be obeyed, but whom it does not occur to one to disobey. Men had not disturbed her, for about her were only small boys. She remembered that a little while before one of her brothers, older than she, had been slain by Krif and flung into the lake because he had approached one of the women. Others, she knew, had left the dwelling and gone into the country to steal themselves a wife. There was room in the tribe for only one man; when a

boy grew up to need a mate, he must go or die.

Now, as she went along the shore, she thought simple thoughts. It was hot. Here were some berries, but they were withered and did not please her. A snake crossed her path; she did not touch it, for it was not good to eat. As she came back towards the settlement she saw in the brushwood something that terrified and excited her. It was an unknown man who stood watching her from a distance. He was not of her tribe, for she could see a strange totem upon his arm. She was paralysed with fear. He would steal her. But all the same, something in his face made her stay. This was Antar, aged sixteen, perhaps, but strong as a grown man, who had recently fled his tribe. Seil pleased him, and the impulse to capture her came to him. But she was too near the drawbridge, and through the brushwood he could see the back of Krif, spear over one shoulder. He hesitated between fear and desire, and Seil, recovering self-control, ran to the drawbridge and disappeared into one of the huts.

Antar could not drive her out of his mind. He had no criterion of beauty. He did not know that she was fair. She was a woman, and

he wanted a woman. Also she attracted him differently from one or two whom he could see about the platform. All day he waited, like a wild beast, and all night. He needed no food; he was used to going without for a couple of days. As for Seil, nearly all that day, while she polished stones she sang a little song on only two notes. Others took it up, and all through the huts rang the monotonous chant. She felt still happier, she did not know why. She was afraid, but pleasure mixed in the fear. When the night was advanced, as if guided by an instinct, she quietly crept out of the hut and went on to the platform to look towards the shore. She stood, the moonlight picking out her charming profile. She waited, she did not know for what. It was natural to her to go to Krif if he wanted her, but she waited all the same for unknown experience. Then, cleaving the silvery oil of the moonlit waters, she saw a dark head—something swimming towards her with even strokes. Soon the man she had seen clasped his hands over the top of a pile and looked up at her, his eyes shining, his mouth parted by a smile. He pleased her. She liked the big brown muscles brought out by the attitude. Seil did not know the meaning of the word “love,” but she knew

that this young man made her glad, filled her with a vague ache. They were silent, for neither possessed more than thirty or forty words, but they drew each other with all their force. The man had noiselessly hoisted himself up the pile, which he now clasped with his knees. He was incredibly brave, for in that attitude a spear thrust would end him. Seil was afraid just then, and fear heightened in her breast the queer ache she had never known before. Then Antar's free hand went out and gripped her wrist, so that his finger nails bit into her skin. Seil experienced a strange intensification of that delicious ache, but she was woman already, though still so near the beast. She snatched away her wrist, and turned round with an air of contempt. Still she did not flee. After a moment she came nearer again, as if moved by curiosity. She saw that the man was about to leap upon the platform. She thought of Krif, and, an exquisite terror invading her, she seized the pile and slid down. A hand touched her rough curls. Together, slowly and noiselessly as snakes, they slid down towards the water. Side by side, swimming slowly, they reached the shore. Antar lifted her up in his arms, and, running nimbly, carried her away towards the secret brushwood. As he

went, Seil rubbed her face against his shoulder, and about his neck clasped her arms.

IV.—*The Neolithic Home*

So much for one particular time, one particular type, and one particular place. The writer estimates that in general such conditions as the above must have applied very broadly because they correspond with the average nature of man, desirous and inarticulate; the average nature of woman, frightened and attracted. But since there are traces of the neolithic period all over Europe, North America, and Asia, since we may presume that there were no Behring Straits, and therefore that communication between Europe and America took place slowly through Northern Asia, we must assume that differences due to climate, to feeding, and especially differences due to distance, must have arisen. One must conceive the prehistoric period as being as varied as our own. If we consider the existing differences between a civilized inhabitant of Buenos Ayres and an Andaman Islander, when we consider the intensity of communication by rail, steamer, book, and missionary which we have

experienced for a hundred years, we are driven to conclude that differences of living are difficult to abolish. If, in spite of all modern advantages, the Chinaman still lives so differently from the Canadian, then in the neolithic period, when there were no nations, practically no tribes, when a change of continent meant a five-thousand-mile walk, we must assume that a great variety of ways of life must have arisen.

If, in the main, the life outlined in the preceding paragraph was common, we can also trace from savage ways of to-day other ways of living, of which something must be said. The reader, if he be inclined to pursue this study more thoroughly, should be warned against drawing conclusions from the present life of savage tribes. Though it may be that a population has been isolated on an island, so far as we know for thousands of years, the way of life of these people may not have stayed exactly where it was. Mr. H. G. Wells, in *The Outline of History*, makes an observation so important that we must reproduce it in full: "Primordial man could have had little or no tradition before the development of speech. All savage and primitive peoples of to-day, on the contrary, are soaked in tradition—the tradition of thousands of genera-

tions. They may have weapons like their remote ancestors, and methods like them, but what were slight and shallow impressions on the minds of their predecessors are now deep and intricate grooves worn throughout the intervening centuries, generation by generation."

Still, if we make that allowance, the way of life of modern savages does lead us to possible conclusions. The most important collection of such facts is to be found in Fehlinger's book *Sexual Life of Primitive People* (translated by Dr. S. Herbert and Mrs. Herbert). We may conclude that prehistoric people did not know what we call modesty. According to Fehlinger, as regards modesty, the Xingu Indians converse on any sexual subject without any reserve; the young Australian natives, male and female, carelessly go nude, and so do the Kenyas of Central Borneo. That is also the case with the Eskimos inside their snow huts. Fehlinger records the observation of Friederici to the effect that many of the articles supposed to be due to modesty are decorative or protective. Fehlinger considers that the tendency of lovers to seek concealment may be due to their fear of attack while they are absorbed. As regards orgies, he thinks that they are merely ceremonial, and

records that among savages there is very little public licentiousness. We may presume that a great deal of this is neolithic, and that in those days women, being in their innocence, did not look upon the exposure of the body as anything remarkable. Woman at that time was probably animal in her expressions, and she probably shared the impulses of the animal. Modesty is a modern invention, and it may be that M. Anatole France is right in ascribing it to the devil.

We may further conclude that there can have been in the neolithic period no equivalent of the modern idea of marriage, except in so far as the neolithic idea involved ownership of woman by man: of this we find more than a trace in the modern white world. From that point of view the savage races do not greatly vary. In some tribes the man is to-day compelled to marry the mother of his child; in others he is not. It is, of course, important to record that among savages the child is not the handicap which it may prove in civilized society, but a potential bread-winner. No doubt, in the neolithic period the barren wife would be retained so long as she was pleasing, or performed useful offices in the household; but in view of the importance of the

child it is hardly likely that she obtained the status that was given to the mother. As soon as the mother ceased to please she probably became a more important person, because the old man of the tribe could easily find new girls with whom to toy, while he instinctively knew that the satisfactory cooking of his meat was a talent rather more scarce. Still, there is no reason to think that any equivalent of modern morals existed in neolithic days. Even to-day we find great laxity before marriage in the lower castes of Kashmir, Agra, Oudh, Berar, and South India. Among the Ghasyas of Baroda we find the custom of trial marriage. The idea of trial probably goes with the idea of fertility, for some tribes, which do not recognize trial marriage, do give a better social status to the woman who bears a child than to the one who cannot. Her status is entirely due to the fact that she produces a valuable asset; the idea is probably neolithic in origin.

As regards marriage, we may in a sense recognize an equivalent in the fact that the women of the tribe were attached to the chief; though this does not resemble modern monogamous marriage, it establishes marriage in a vague form. Though divorce presumably took

the form of a stone club, we have no reason to think that the neolithic man was any more brutal than the modern lion, which does not as a rule torture the lioness, and which, in fact, will hunt for her while she is bearing her cubs. The main idea of marriage, namely the faithfulness of women, was certainly present in neolithic times. The faithfulness of man had, of course, not been thought of, and was not to become even remotely operative before the present day.

We find more hints of neolithic probabilities in the savage tribes that Fehlinger considers. Nearly everywhere we see that married women are expected to be faithful; this is so usual that exceptions are worth quoting. For instance, the Djats of Baluchistan, and the Mirasis, are quite careless of conjugal fidelity; the Korawas, of Madras, will go further: when in debt they sell or pawn their wives. Those are among the few exceptions. On the other hand, the Veddahs of Ceylon are monogamous, and a seducer is generally murdered. It may be said that to-day most tribes are monogamous. We still find polyandry (women endowed with several husbands) in Central Africa and in the north of India, but this is rare. We must assume that there was no polyandry in the neolithic period,

because the old man of the tribe would never have tolerated a rival. It may have arisen in a very recent period, say five or six thousand years ago, when the taboos made it difficult to procure a wife, when the young rivals of the old men, expelled from the tribes, decided to co-operate to obtain a wife by force and then to share her fairly.

This is a very important point, owing to a prevalent opinion that there was a prehistoric time when woman grew so important that she governed the tribe. This is called the matriarchate. There has been a good deal of discussion over the matriarchate, and we find such authorities as Lester Ward and J. J. Atkinson contradicting each other absolutely. The truth is probably somewhere between the two positions. In the neolithic period woman was probably neither a ruler nor a slave. When the chief went hunting the mothers would naturally control the children and domestic affairs. As domestic affairs were the politics of that period, it is conceivable that the elder mothers met to decide what should be done. If the chief stayed away a long time it is possible that feminine republics arose. It is also possible that when the chief returned he found it rather difficult to take up

the reins of government, because many things in regard to children, fishing, building, would be in train in which he would have no share. In some cases the chief would violently recapture his authority with a club, but in others, being comfortable, he would probably, without thinking out the situation, *feel* that all was going well and tolerate feminine management. Thus the women might acquire authority; the male child would take the situation for granted, and reproduce it when he formed his own family. In that sense there may have been a matriarchate, but to suggest that government was in the hands of the women is an illusion. However active they might be, and whatever power they might possess, the man certainly retained the stone veto.

One word should be said as to monogamy. We have pictured the old man of the tribe as polygamous. That is not doubtful, but, on the other hand, it is probable that when hunting was bad the chief found it difficult to secure enough food for himself and his wives. It would not occur to him to reduce his own portion, so he probably ceased to maintain so many wives, using the simple devices of adult murder and infanticide. Presumably neolithic woman looked upon

this method as normal, and it is probable that she did not turn against the chief because his hands were embrued with blood; something of this attitude persists in modern women. Therefore, as men multiplied, as tribes formed, it became more and more inconvenient to have a great number of wives. Monogamy arose, not from a moral instinct, but as a matter of expediency. Monogamy is purely a question of food; if we could conceive a pestilence destroying nine-tenths of the human race, polygamy would probably reassert itself as nature's method of re-peopling the world. There is every reason to think that in the neolithic period there were couples as tenderly united as are to-day the birds, where purity was preserved by habit rather than by love. If once more we consider the savages we discover a few strange things. Many tribes are monogamous, and impose the death penalty for infidelity. On the other hand, among many Australian tribes a woman may be doubly married: in the first place to an elderly legal husband who can afford to pay her price, in the second place to a variable lover. Both these marriages are tolerated, and Fehlinger records that sometimes the young lover kills the elderly husband. This is an important vestige, for it

represents the end of the old man of the tribe : one day, when he grew weak, the young man came in, slew him, and took over his women. Other tribes, such as the Koryaks of Northern Asia, have strange views on this question, and kill illegitimate children. In north-western Brazil we find a civilized development of a neolithic idea : the old man passes his children on to a young man, who must support them. This is a patriarchal vestige ; the chief enjoys the rights over women and gets rid of the consequences.

It follows from this consideration that in the neolithic period a woman was looked upon as valuable property ; she retained this character up to the beginning of last century, when she began to work outside the home. Woman's economic independence has cost her her value. In neolithic times, being a piece of property, she may have been treated with the regard that is everywhere accorded to valuable horses. Possibly savage courtship customs indicate the neolithic point of view. In a great many tribes to-day we find that the bridegroom and his friends must perform a sham capture, opposed by force by the relatives of the bride, by her screams and tears. Fehlinger does not consider that this

necessarily points to the neolithic habit of marriage by capture, but rather to the fact that girls were often given against their will. His opinion, however, is frequently controverted, and it is much more likely that this common custom does point to the stealing of wives in neolithic days. It is worth recording that among the Garos of Assam it is the bridegroom who is captured; Fehlinger does not think that this points to mother-rule, and other anthropologists agree with him; what it does point to the present writer is unable to say.

Apart from this question, involving polygamy, we have also to consider another condition which may have arisen towards the end of the neolithic period, and that is promiscuity. Promiscuity, namely indiscriminate relations between men and women inside a tribe, is still present in the world; sometimes it is regulated, limited inside a family, and sometimes it is general. We have already quoted the Korawas and the Djats. We must add that a great many tribes have only a limited conception of what we call incest. Promiscuity is not to-day a general system; it existed formerly among the North American Indians, and it still prevails in small groups in northern Asia. According to Fehlinger it is a phase in the

development of the tribe. The present writer would suggest that promiscuity is abnormal, and that it arises only when there is a very fluctuating population, when many strange women are brought in by capture, when tribes coalesce for purposes of war, in times of pestilence, or when many are killed in battle: in other words, in unsettled periods. As soon as men settle, some regular arrangement, such as polygamy or monogamy, comes in, and promiscuity disappears. We may imagine that in the neolithic period, though the old man would not tolerate a rival, he might by death be replaced half a dozen times or more in the life of one woman; that is not promiscuity. Actually, promiscuity was probably destroyed when exogamy appeared as the most important modifying factor of the neolithic period.

Exogamy, meaning compulsion upon a man to select a wife out of a group bearing a totem different from his own, is the root of constituted races and nations. It probably arose towards the end of the neolithic period, perhaps only in the age of bronze, when small groups, headed by a chief, had learnt to live together. We find traces of it still, notably in the Solomon Islands, where no woman may have relations with a man

unless he belongs to another exogamic group : that is to say, to a family of different blood. Fehlinger points out that the custom was not necessarily a vestige of the idea that you should not marry into your own family ; he thinks that we must look upon exogamy as a prehistoric tendency in men. Fehlinger has on the subject an interesting theory : that exogamy may have been temporary, and that a young man may have sought a wife outside his tribe when women were scarce inside the tribe. He suggests also that women may have been scarce, owing to female infanticide, which was prevalent ; girl babies were killed so that the tribe might not be encumbered during migration or in battle. He considers that the tribes may have observed the bad effect of inbreeding, though he doubts whether they could understand them. He comes down finally to two principal points of view. One of them is that, inside families which had attained a certain stage of development, the fact that the children were brought up together, presumably nude, reduced inside the family the mystery which determines sex attraction. In other words, the young people of the tribe, being accustomed to each other, found extreme mystery and therefore attraction in strangers.

Therefore, in the neolithic period, it is probable that the expelled young men, though they were forced to find wives in other tribes, may also have preferred them. Wife-stealing may have been attractive rather than compulsory. It is also certain that the wife was not always stolen, in this sense, that she must have placed herself in the way of the thief. The other alternative put forward by Fehlinger is anthropologically sounder. Though he does not commit himself (any more than does Westermarck) to the debatable view that incest necessarily lowers the intellectual and physical value of the children, he does suggest that the exogamous stock may have been stronger, therefore that it prevailed over the children of inbred groups; the fact that these people were born of parents of different blood may have produced in them an instinct. They acquired an heredity which bade them once again seek their wives in groups of different blood. Little by little this instinct to avoid relations with one's own family may have translated itself into our feeling of repulsion before the idea.

V.—The Kiss

It is hoped that from the above the reader will have gathered an idea of the position of woman in that dim period which precedes history. It is impossible to make more than intelligent guesses. The general picture is that of a favoured slave, sometimes brutally treated, but asserting herself by good brains, of which presumably some existed in neolithic times. We must not look upon these people as too near the beast. The person who discovered fire, the one who first thought of spinning flax, were not only far from stupid, but probably extraordinary persons—geniuses; to-day he who is fit to be a genius can draw on the libraries, the experience, and the tradition of five thousand years. Pre-historic man had nothing, and of that he made something. No doubt there were also women of brilliant intellect, and no doubt, too, they asserted themselves.

How they were treated as regards the emotions is another question. From that point of view they were slaves, and it is doubtful that in the modern sense they were loved. We may conclude this for a peculiar reason: so far as we

know, the kiss, symbol of love rather than of lust, is a modern invention.

The reader may be surprised to hear that in a large portion of the world to-day the kiss is not practised. According to Mr. Havelock Ellis it does not exist in Eastern Asia, except in Japan. In China mothers go so far as to threaten their naughty children that they will give them "the white man's kiss." In *Aphrodite*, by Pierre Louys, Demetrios enters the garden of the courtesans to find "yellow maidens who refuse their lips." Again, in *Almayer's Folly*, by Joseph Conrad, we see that when Nina kisses Dain the Malay, he is startled by the unaccustomed caress. Malay women are said to kiss their little children, but this is probably merely the tigress nuzzling her cubs.

We find the key to this in Greek writers, sneering at the barbarians who know nothing of the refinements of love. We find this contempt particularly in the Lower Greeks of Alexandria. Originally, the relations of men and women—and this certainly applies to the neolithic period—were governed exclusively by the sex impulse, and a certain analogy with the relationships of animals will lead the reflective observer to conclude that a demand to which one cannot assign

a date may have arisen for a variation of the normal forms. Whereas, on the original lines, the kiss would have been an impossibility, it presumably became accidental. As humanity derived satisfaction from it, the kiss presumably persisted. By degrees the caress became separated from the idea of passion. It became symbolic of affection. It became a caress entirely by itself, and little by little grew almost commonplace.

Still, let us say in conclusion that this brief analysis of the kiss is not irrelevant to the situation of woman in neolithic days. Before the kiss there was no love in the modern sense, but only an almost functional exercise. It is sad to think that a number of men to-day are still neolithic; many a working-class woman never receives a kiss from her husband until he chooses to play the lover. Thus we may say, as regards neolithic woman, that she probably did not know the kiss, therefore that she did not know the refinements of love. There probably was faithfulness, sacrifice, but there was no delicacy. The love which governs the history of woman was unborn. Society had to evolve much more before there could flicker in it anything so fugitive.

CHAPTER II

IN THE DAYS OF THE PATRIARCHS

I.—In Ancient Palestine

A CERTAIN poetry attaches to the pastoral life of the aged land of the Hebrews. W. Robertson Smith gives a brief and ideal picture of this country, of “the ocean and the desert, the pastures of the wilderness and the terraced vineyards of sunny hills, the cedars, fig-trees, and rhododendrons of Lebanon, the cornfields of Jezreel, and the oak-clad glades of Tabor; the shores of the Lake of Galilee bright with shrubbery of oleander, the hot cane brakes and palm groves of Jericho.” Under this ardent sun industrious domesticity prevailed; it was located in scenery thus delicately limned about six thousand years ago: it is the oldest civilization at all fit to be called a civilization.

The Hebrews were perhaps not the first people to achieve social organization. They were probably senior to the Chinese, though

slightly junior to the Egyptians. They were junior, too, to the civilization of Nippur, according to the expedition of the University of Pennsylvania. But all the same, so far as our knowledge goes—and of course that knowledge is not great—the Hebrews were the first to become conscious of the moral basis in the life of a nation. That is why the writer selects them as the first link in the chain which unites us with neolithic times. Other groups, older than the Hebrew society, seem to have known force, and only force, as the cement of their social edifice. The Hebrews could not avoid force in a world that understood nothing else, but they can claim to be the first race which recognized the idea of order, of justice, upon which modern states are based, imperfectly no doubt, but based all the same. The Hebrews took the first step towards modernity; in regard to women they established a new point of view.

Where the Hebrews came from is difficult to say. Presumably, like many other tribes, they came out of Mesopotamia to discover Canaan, suffered in Egypt, then knew greatness, war, and captivity. They came as nomads, driving their flocks before them. They entered a land thronged with people that were later called

Canaanites, Moabites, Ammonites, Philistines. The poetry of the long trail attaches to the Hebrews marching towards the West, through deserts without water, wildernesses haunted by savage beasts, to come at last upon the milk and honey of Canaan. By degrees, as the flowing waters and the soft air made settlement possible, the Hebrews abandoned their nomadic habits. They lived no longer only upon their flocks, but they cultivated the land; about their cities rose patches where cereals were grown; about their houses fell the shadow of the olive groves. It is that settlement which made it possible for the Hebrews to organize a social life where woman had her place, where marriage had a significance. Also, living close together, they were compelled to learn how so to live. That is to say, fair play and justice were by necessity erected into laws.

Certainly, in their early days, the Hebrews were governed with less magnificence than the Egyptians. Five or six thousand years ago, in Egypt, together with an autocratic government, there was already an educated official class, systematic taxation, and a department of public works. In that sense, the Hebrews were more primitive. Coming as invaders and conquerors

in an open country, they naturally adopted tribal ownership of the land, an arrangement common in the East, and which still prevails in Arabia and North Africa. Until recently it still existed in the hunting grounds of the Red Indian tribes. No doubt, as time went on, as Palestinian life became complicated by industry and trade, the rights of the tribe became dim. Presumably land was leased to a particular family inside the tribe, and passed by succession, like ordinary property. It is presumable that the family could sell the land, but much more presumable that it could sell only to a member of the tribe. Selling, buying, inheriting, together with money-lending on a scale sometimes justifying the word banking—all this tends to show that land was an article of commerce. Not until late in Hebrew history do we come across the landless man. He came after the Hebrew aristocrats, whose wealth and luxurious living served to break up the old agricultural clans.

II.—Making a Nation

It is difficult to say what social life could have been like in those days. In the middle period of Hebrew history, about four thousand years

ago, there seems to have been much feasting, drinking of wine, dancing, singing to the accompaniment of stringed instruments and of reeds. This part of their history is uncertain, because we know little of the Hebrews until the tribes have been welded into a nation.

Here we strike a feature of the greatest importance, which has much to do with the strength and development of the Hebrew race, and therefore with the position of its women. The reader must realize that in wandering tribes the position of woman, weak and burdened by childbirth, must be low. If in Hebrew society woman rose higher than she had done before, it is because the tribes were slowly welded into a nation by the action of the patriarchs. Of many patriarchs we do not know the names; every village must have had its patriarch. This causes one to wonder all the more at the energy and steadfastness with which these lonely and scattered elders proceeded to weave the pattern of Israel.

The Hebrews were converted into a nation by two principal means: (a) by being kept separate from other tribes, (b) by moral laws. The Hebrews were probably the first people who looked upon the non-Hebrews as unclean and

fit to be avoided. The surrounding races seem not only to have taken other peoples as slaves, but to have intermarried with them on full equality. The Hebrews from the beginning to the end of their history were in theory absolutely exclusive. They did not grant equality to the natives of the lands they overcame. In the early days of the Canaanite conquest they mixed fairly freely with the aborigines, but this died away or was forbidden. The law and public feeling were firm against marriage with non-Hebrews. From the year 2000 B.C. onwards they are a comparatively unmixed race.

This must have come about through pride of conquest. The Hebrews had in them a moral impulse which distinguished them from the people among whom they found themselves. It was this kept them together, made them into a great fighting race, and at the same time prevented their evolution. It kept them to the end what they were; it arrested their social progress and their use of invention, but it proved a cement of unity. Hatred of race-mixture served them as a shield against other races. The feeling of the Hebrews against miscegenation was so strong that, after the fall of Jericho, of Ai, of other cities, not only the male

but the female inhabitants were massacred. In so doing the Hebrews showed themselves different from other Asiatic tribes. In those days the male inhabitants of a fallen city were often slain, but the women were taken into the harems of the conquerors. The early Hebrews seem to have resisted this easy temptation. Indeed, their objection to intermarriage with other races persisted even when they were enslaved: the Hebrews do not seem to have changed while they were captives in Babylon, after the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar. The habits of Babylon did not influence the Hebrew temperament: on their return from captivity the Hebrews who had taken strange wives were made an end of. It is worth recording that this event happened as late as about 500 B.C., which means that from the beginning to the end of their history the Hebrew point of view failed to change.

From father to son the Hebrews handed down the prohibition to marry women from Canaan or from strange lands. A few exceptions can be noted, such as the marriages of kings with the daughters of foreign royal houses, but those are not material. Such marriages are invariably political; at all times it has been recognized that

a nation which needs allies must occasionally arrange a royal wedding. Moreover, there are other side lights which are vital to any examination of the situation of woman in Palestine. While a Hebrew might not take unto himself an infidel wife, there was no absolute objection to the giving of a Hebrew girl to an important foreigner. The reason is fairly clear. In the first place woman is less important than man because she can be controlled; in the second place, among Asiatic peoples the race is not the woman's race, it is the man's race. Therefore, while a Hebrew girl could be cast away to the stranger to give him children who would be infidels, a Hebrew would not want infidel blood to run through the veins of children who would inherit his property and perpetuate his memory.

III.—The Moral Law

The above point of view does not indicate a low moral condition; it is absolutely logical. While the virtue of woman was important, from the Hebrew point of view the virtue of man was more important, because man was the race. In that sense the Hebrews showed themselves a

great people : living in an East of blood-lust and licence, they developed an instinct towards the moral organization of society. The whole trend of Hebrew life was ethical. A woman was chosen as wife not so much for her beauty as because of certain qualities—humility, frugality, or charity. If we consider the laws and regulations of Hebrew social life we form the picture of a society rather akin to that of New England in the days of the early Puritans. To work, to maintain oneself soberly, to steal the goods of no other man, and to keep the law; upon this hard and clean basis the Hebrews created a nation capable of cruelty and occasional immorality, but which escaped many of the lusts, filths, and pestilences of the Oriental.

Naturally, human nature did not then go through a golden age. In spite of the precepts, much vice runs through Hebrew history; individuals seem to have taken from the Canaanites idolatry and abominable religious orgies. Particularly during the imperial period of Jerusalem luxury and the forms of vice which spring from it broke out from time to time. That is inevitable; what matters is the continual stress of the law on moral conditions which, on the whole, we to-day strive to uphold.

Thus we find a number of sanitary laws prohibiting the eating of camel, rabbit, hare, pig, shellfish, bird of prey, lizard, mole, etc. All of these are wise, particularly in a hot climate. We find regulations for the treatment of leprosy, others for the maintenance of cleanliness. Above all—and this has a closer moral bearing on the question—we find Hebrews realizing the bad racial effects of inbreeding. Three thousand five hundred years ago the Hebrews knew that a man should not marry his mother, step-mother, aunt, half-sister, granddaughter, or step-daughter. This seems simple enough to-day, but if we recall that the Hebrews were living among peoples promiscuous as animals, we realize the progress and the probable effect upon the race.

The Hebrew basis is moral. The Hebrews refuse to imitate other Asiatics: they prohibit disfigurement. At last, alone in the East, they give a value to the chastity of women other than wives. After Amnon's outrage on his sister Tamar, his brother Absalom causes him to be slain. Again, Simeon and Levi take vengeance upon Shechem after he has defiled their sister Dinah. In other words, the Hebrew resents the lowering of his sister's status to that of a

loose woman. He creates a new point of view : he does not merely seek compensation, a girl being a piece of property ; the idea of purity has entered his mind. Thus we find the law imposing the death penalty for infidelity in marriage, or for the seduction of an affianced girl. The idea of marriage is also born, for a man seducing a non-affianced girl is compelled to pay her price and to take her for wife. These laws should not be looked upon as savage, even though the death penalty be inflicted, because in the Hebrew system, polygamy always being possible, a man might gain access to a number of women. Thus, if he resorted to infidelity, to seduction or crime, he was much more guilty than if he had been confined to one woman only. In the main, the Hebrew was far less savage than the surrounding pagan. Savage or no, he afforded to woman a position she had never enjoyed since life manifested itself upon earth.

IV.—The Position of Woman

A superficial student, reading Hebrew literature, would conclude that in Palestine the position of woman was low. It was low, but one

should remember that it was higher in Palestine than in other countries, and that the contrast between the Hebrew treatment of women and the neolithic was equal to the difference of treatment we to-day afford to human beings as opposed to animals. An important point is that the Hebrews did not practise the harem system; though they lived in Asia, they gave their women a freedom which to-day the women of India or Turkey do not enjoy. Women went alone about the streets of Jerusalem, even the young girls, who congregated round the wells to gossip among themselves, and sometimes with the young men. This does not mean that the Hebrews did not guard against obvious dangers; they knew as much as we do of "the way of a man with a maid." They expected of a woman discretion of behaviour, and they rated her high when she was discreet. They had also precise ideas as to her place in the world, which was one of utility; in a respectable Hebrew household it was the duty of the woman to spin, to weave wool and flax into stuffs, to preserve provisions, to cook, to sew, to plant the vine, etc.—briefly, to perform the functions of any countrywoman in the early nineteenth century.

But it must be acknowledged that, however

much women may have mattered in private life, however much they may sometimes have ruled their husbands, they are purely incidental in the Hebrew scheme. We see this in the family tables of the Palestinian families. Never is a daughter mentioned in the list; the race is preserved through the men; the record states who is the father, but not the mother. The mother is known only if some action of hers affects the family. Indeed, we have very few records of Hebrew wives, presumably because their situation gave them little chance of asserting themselves.

In general, in Palestine woman was a piece of property, and in some periods a piece of property which could be brutally treated. A case is recorded where a Levite cut a woman into twelve pieces, to use the fragments as rallying signals for the tribes. This was not punished. It is, however, only fair to mention that this incident happened in a period of anarchy, in the midst of war, pillage and arson. Still, it sheds a psychological light upon the prevailing Hebrew point of view. We shall see further on that no Hebrew would have treated his wife in this manner, but a woman did not exist until she was married. For instance, in one particular case

a daughter was sacrificed by her father as a burnt offering. It is important to note that the daughter herself thought this right and natural. Woman, at that time, did not assert herself; she looked upon herself as a sort of slave until she reached wifedom.

All through the Hebrew records we discover this point of view. We find, for instance, that a father attacked by a mob is willing to give up his daughters as a peace offering. In other words, a girl is a commodity to be bought, sold and used. So strong is the point of view that even a married woman must carry the load of inferiority which was hers as a young girl. Consider, for instance, the case of the wife of Joakim. When a charge of infidelity was made against her by two men who had vainly attempted to obtain her self-surrender she appeared before the assembly, and at first the charge was believed. In that period justice seems to have been popular; it was exercised not so much by a court as by a kind of large jury made up of the people of the village. In this case, when the woman appeared before her peers, before her defence was presented the assembly believed her accusers because they were men. If the evidence had not later been

examined, though innocent, the woman would have suffered.

The Hebrew assumption was that woman is inferior to man. The Hebrew idea of a good man is that of a protector, who sees that a woman is fed and allowed to pursue her life in peace. In return, she must be humble; if a good man marries her he is conferring honour upon her, and she must keep herself submissive to him.

Here we come again upon the details which distinguish the Hebrews from other Asiatic peoples. They could not help looking upon women as inferiors, because that was the trend of the times, but their moral laws enabled them to rise above this mistaken idea. If, for instance, a Hebrew, in the accident of travel, compromised himself with a married woman, he looked upon himself as sinful and feared that the curse of childlessness might be laid upon his house. He had no scruples in regard to an unmarried woman, so that the moral point of view is incomplete, but a man goes a long way forward when he agrees that it is his moral duty to respect another man's wife. It may be that this connects to a certain extent with a rise in the position of woman. Several Hebrew women

appear to have had the ear of the people ; one, notably, appears to have led a tribe and to have arranged preliminaries of peace. The same applies to Judith, a rich and well-considered widow, who was respectfully heard by the Hebrew leaders when they were menaced by Holofernes.

We also discover the dawning of humanitarianism in certain of the Hebrew laws affecting women. A Hebrew who killed a slave was severely punished ; if he injured his slave he was compelled to set her at liberty ; ill-treatment of a mother was a very serious crime. Certain provisions in regard to slaves, whether Hebrew or foreign, also allowed of a slave being free after seven years ; moreover, a slave who displeased was not to be slain : she was to go free.

A certain protection was also given to girls. Unlicensed relations with a Hebrew maiden entailed (according to period) either marriage, or compensation, or compulsory marriage. If a man falsely impugned the honour of his bride he paid a fine and was compelled to marry her. If the charge proved true the girl was stoned. All this is very dim, but it suggests that in Hebrew society, stumbling as she went, woman was struggling into an improved situation. It

is certain that a wife was not enslaved, though other women might be so treated; indeed, a daughter might be sold as a servant, but this did not damage her, because there seems to have been no class distinction between master and servant. Marriage often took place between the master and a Hebrew girl servant. This condition still prevails among the peasantry all over the world. It is also worth mentioning that, though a girl who stood out against her parents might suffer severely, she was not as a rule given in marriage against her consent. Pressure would be put upon her, but it is not likely that she would be coerced.

V.—*A Hebrew Maiden*

Zinar is the daughter of a rich man. He owns much land, great flocks; in his cellars stand many clay jars filled with sweet oil or with the red wine of Lebanon. She has many hand-maidens clad in garments of brown flax, who braid their hair more simply than she. It is morning. She lies upon a bed of ivory; the freshness of the dawn is held away by coverings of soft wool dyed in crimson and purple. At

her feet sit her favourite handmaidens, who play upon the viol a monotonous tune that drones and wails alongs its incomplete gamut. She is languid. Life is flat, and she aches for experience. It is time that she were wed. She is nearly fourteen.

At last, weary of the music, Zinar makes a sign with her thin brown hand, upon the fingers of which glow uncut stones. The instruments are muted. A handmaid, understanding that her mistress would rise, brings to her a bowl of water wherein to dip her hands. Then, in a cup of hollowed greenstone, she brings the precious ointment of crushed myrrh, to annoint the skin of Zinar and make it supple. They braid her hair. They help her to draw on her garments and ornaments. Warmth rises in the air; about the house is heard a stirring in the streets of Jerusalem, the slow rumble of carts that oxen draw, the jingling of bells.

“I will go out,” says Zinar. Her handmaidens follow.

She walks along the street, a resplendent picture. About her shoulders hangs a crimson mantle which sets off the brightness of her eyes. Her black hair is held with golden crimping-pins. Upon her head, under a hood, a great ornament

of emerald and gold hides among the flowing curls; from the edge of the hood falls a delicate veil through which is seen a smiling red mouth, and eyes that look about from side to side. Upon her breast are chains of silver and gold. Over her ankles cluster anklets of gold, green copper, matrix turquoise; they clank and clatter as she walks. About her wrists crowding bracelets espouse her movement as she goes. Her handmaidens follow, their heads bound in white wimples.

Zinar goes slowly along the street, looking carelessly through the unglazed windows into the interiors where are sold clothes, perfumes, weapons, perhaps cats from Persia and monkeys from the Indian jungle with which a wealthy maid may play. Then, as she goes, her eyes meet another pair, brown as her own. It is a young man in flowing garments of white, dark-skinned, with curling hair and a light black beard. Their eyes meet. She looks away. Haughty, her neck stretched out, Zinar goes on as if she had not seen him, but walking so that her body may swing as a ship upon the sea, treading light, with mincing feet, while her anklets tinkle. But as Zinar and her handmaidens turn into a side street Zinar looks back. The young man

in the white garments stands where she left him, gazing after her. In her eyes a glow of pleasure rises. She is wanton and modest. She looks away.

VI.—*The Coming of the Wife*

The most important fact in Hebrew moral law is the creation of the wife idea. The Egyptians certainly came to a rather similar point of view, but, holding very vague moral theories, they never afforded to the wife the status which she found in Palestine. It is, however, a little difficult to understand exactly what the Hebrews meant by a wife, because the idea of monogamy had not entered their Eastern mind. The Hebrew records nowhere clearly describe a marriage ceremony. Indeed, very probably there was no definite ceremony; the guardians of the young people came together; the girl's price (or dowry, but this comes much later) was fixed, and the marriage was concluded practically by contract. It is also interesting to see that marriage could be contracted by repute, as it can be to-day in Scotland. If a Hebrew living with a woman declared her to be

his wife, she was legally his wife. That is, so far as law went in Palestine; marriage was governed less by law than by custom.

Still, the thing that matters is not the detail but the principle; it was the Hebrew who evolved the wife idea out of the neolithic point of view that a wife was merely a piece of plunder. It is therefore certain that the Hebrew wife did not consider her rights in the same way as what to-day we call a wife. She accepted polygamy; though sometimes jealous, she never discussed the right and wrong of it. She also took it as normal that her husband should keep as many favoured slaves as he chose. In one recorded case a Hebrew king had seventy-eight wives and slaves; but some difference of status seems to have existed, for eighteen of these women are set apart and described as wives. The Hebrew wife, therefore, obtained a definite recognition.

What this amounted to is exceedingly vague, but it may be conjectured that the status of wife was connected with the idea of property. Most likely this arose from the fact that a Hebrew would take a wife only from a family of good birth; a slave he would merely buy. Therefore, if there was property on both sides, it had to be legally settled who should be the

heir. The fact that a great deal of property was owned in common did not alter the other fact that, though many might own, only one could control. The controller would have to be the heir, and it was natural to choose him among the children of the wives, the women of position, rather than among the children of the slaves. We are entitled to assume this, for in certain cases, when a legal wife has borne a child, the sons of the slaves can be dismissed with gifts. Those sons are inferior, while the future of the legitimate sons is assured.

We find all through the records indications of the inferiority of the non-legal wife. Notably, in a case where the aggression of another tribe is anticipated the Hebrews place in front of their wives and legitimate children their slaves and their children. It follows that the wife is more precious and that she must be protected with the body of the slave. A wife enjoys certain guarantees. A Hebrew might divorce his wife, but if no fault could be alleged against her he had to leave to her family the price he paid for her. Also, he might not marry her if she had married another man. This insured her not being sold back into practical slavery after her widowhood. If a Hebrew took several wives he

was compelled to provide them all with food, raiment, and affection; in fact, about 1520 B.C. it was laid down that after marriage a man must for one year refrain from travelling; he was compelled to stay at home and cheer his wife. It seems clear, therefore, that the wife stands out among the women as the bearer of legitimate issue. This is self-evident when we consider that a wife might lose her status if she was childless while one of her husband's slaves gave him a son. But, on the other hand, if later on the childless wife did bear a son she would have power to cause the slave and her child to be expelled from the tribe, or sold. From the Hebrew point of view childlessness was the greatest affliction, and the normal reward of sin. This is a natural conclusion in a developing country, where more hands meant better crops, and especially in weak tribes who much needed man-power for the continual wars against the Philistines.

So strong was this need that the Hebrews compelled a man to marry his sister-in-law after his brother's decease. This later became illegal, but it is likely that popular feeling prevented the application of the law. The people considered it vital that every woman should bear a

son to continue her husband's race. A woman who failed was a woman disgraced. This idea is held to-day all over the East. Those who are interested will find in a novel called *Saadah, la Marocaine*, an Eastern maid to whom a fortune-teller promises barrenness. The light goes out of the girl's eyes. She feels accursed. All through their history the Hebrews maintained this outlook; it went so far that very often a barren wife gave her handmaid to her husband, as if she could through another woman perform the maternal functions for which she was chosen. In a way this shows how lofty must have been the status of the wife, for she used the handmaid as a worthless instrument, knowing herself secure in her wifely position.

VII.—*In Modern Java*

A fairly clear idea of the position of the Hebrew woman can be obtained through a book called *Letters of a Javanese Princess*, published in 1911. In this book Princess Kartini gives an account of the life of women in Java that is probably not far distant from that of Hebrew women five or six thousand years ago. The

Javanese girl is practically imprisoned, being strictly brought up as a Mussulman. She is given to a strange bridegroom whom she has perhaps never even seen. She is not allowed to leave her country, or even her house; she has not the slightest chance of a career; though she may be very highly educated, her attainments can never go beyond the home. After she marries she may be divorced by her husband for a whim, and thus she loses her social status. But in no case can she divorce him. She lives under an oppressive etiquette. When she passes an elder brother or sister she must bow and creep on her hands and knees; after each sentence spoken by her elders she must salute; when laughing she may not open her mouth.

The letters of Kartini, who rebelled against this system and did much to break it up, a little over ten years ago, make pathetic reading. Let us quote her briefly:—

“Oh, you do not know what it is to love this age, this new age, with heart and soul, and yet to be bound hand and foot, chained by all the laws, customs, and conventions of one’s land.”

“But we *must* marry, must, must. Not to marry is the greatest sin which the Mahommedan woman can commit.”

“Love! What do we know of love? How can we love a man whom we have never known?”

At last there comes a quotation which reveals the other side of polygamy, which suggests that even the submissive women of Palestine may have felt much as a woman of our day would feel:—

“Can you imagine what hell-pain a woman must suffer when her husband comes home with another—a rival, whom she must recognize as his legal wife? He can torture her to death, mistreat her as he will; if he does not choose to give her back her freedom she can whistle to the moon for her rights.”

In this cry from a modern prison in an Eastern land we hear perhaps blending accents of other voices that rose by the shores of the Dead Sea. Those were still tragic times for women, and though the Hebrews did much to raise woman from the position of the beast to that of a human being, though they rose infinitely above anything that the East knew, they were still pilgrims in the dawn, and the broad sunshine of feminine freedom still lay many centuries below the horizon.

CHAPTER III

GLORY AND GRANDEUR

I.—Antiquity

WHEN Edgar Allan Poe, in his invocation to Helen, sang

“ . . . the glory that was Greece,
And the grandeur that was Rome . . . ”

he wrote rather in general, and was truthful only in a limited way. Certainly there arose in Greece much glory, in Rome much grandeur, but there also arose grandeur in Greece, glory in Rome; on the other hand, cruelty, bestial ignorance, stupidity and superstition reigned in both places. Suffering as we do from the legend of beautiful antiquity, we forget the hideous side of Greek and Roman life, dwelling on its poetry.

One cannot help being so affected. Think for a moment of the Feast of Floralia, of the youths and maidens clad in flowing white

garments, garlands of flowers upon their long, shining locks; they go through the olive groves to a secret glade where stands an altar of white marble. Upon this they lay as an offering to the gods the wine of Naxos and the honey of Hymettus. The very names thrill, and a suggestion of gaiety, half-graceful, half-barbaric, arises when we learn that these young people, who go singing through the glade, have gilded their lips.

The state of Rome and of Greece was not rotten; that is, it was not always rotten. The gilded lips which to-day address us hid the corruption below. In regard to women particularly it can be said that Greece and Rome did nothing for them; at least only during its corruption did Rome entertain women as it did men. Rome tolerated more than Greece, but in fact the progress of woman in Athens and Rome was achieved by her own personality.

One difficulty, however, in the appreciation of woman is that "Greece" is a very general term, that in ancient times there was no real Greece. There was a city of Athens, a city of Corinth, a city of Sparta; but they were rivals, often enemies, and only occasionally allies. Another difficulty is that Greek history is long,

and that between the days of Letex, the first king of Laconia (Sparta) and the conquest of Greece by Rome some 1,400 years may have elapsed. This means that variation was considerable, and that when we say "Greece" we must imply a particular place and a particular period.

Since we cannot do this, let us review briefly the general situation from period to period. At the time of Homer, something over 3,000 years ago, the way of living in Greece differed profoundly from what it later became. Apart from a few singers such as Homer, there was very little poetry, painting or building; there were probably no philosophers, and certainly no philosophers of the type of Socrates. Those Greeks were nothing but an assembly of tribes, held together loosely, as are to-day certain Arabian tribes.

All the same, these Greeks had a certain degree of polish. Notably they had learnt to tell agreeable lies; the moral point of view of the Jew meant nothing to the Greek; the Iliad and the Odyssey are full of liars; the heroic Ulysses is the arch-deceiver. But, on the other hand, they showed too the brutality of the savage. In contrast with the sentimentality of

Homer in the case of Andromache (the widow of Hector), the Greeks casually exposed their unwanted children to die in the wilderness. The old were killed or allowed to starve. The idea of love, as we know it to-day, was very feeble. When a town was captured the noblest and fairest ladies, married or single, were handed over to the victors as slaves.

It is interesting to notice, by the way, that the Greek lady thus handed over to a conqueror was not disgraced; Briseis is not looked down upon because she has become the toy of the Greeks; Menelaus calmly takes back Helen of Troy after she has lived with Paris and Deiphobus. In the Iliad Helen regrets the bloodshed she caused, but not her loss of virtue.

The Greek woman of the early period was subject only to force. She was an ornament, an ornamental piece of cattle. The point of view is quite clear in early Greek literature. We find it much later in Xenophon when he says of the capture of a wife by an enemy: "If such an accident happen to a woman without her own fault, she is not the less honoured among men." Nor should she be, but what is interesting is the lack of jealousy. This means that to the early Greeks a woman was a

woman as a chair was a chair. In later Greece individual jealousy grew strong, but presumably because a woman was a piece of property. It is curious that such points of view should be held by people comparatively polished; the early Greeks washed their hands before meals, sponged their tables, drank sweet wine, did not get very drunk, were fairly hospitable, and employed a poet to sing at meals. We must therefore conclude that those Greeks were already very Asiatic. They became more so as time went on, as luxury increased and as they became more and more indifferent to the gods. This is emphasized as we come to Imperial Athens, about 300 B.C.; now manners and clothing have become very expensive, less people live in the country and more in the cities, we have pictures of women dressed in fine linen and threading gold through their hair. But this is a period of politics and armies; women have ceased to count; they have lost even the pioneer position they had in the wild Homeric tribes. We shall see a little further on how they were considered. It is enough now to quote Thucydides, who remarks "That woman is best who is least spoken of among men, whether for good or for evil."

II.—The Coming of the Lady

So far as we know, the idea of refinement by birth and education did not exist among the Hebrews. The old English doggerel “When Adam delved and Eve span, Who was then the gentleman?” does not apply to Greece. From early times the Greeks conceived the idea of class. Women of the governing class were fairly well treated, but all through Greek history women of lower position are treated with the most terrible cruelty, bought and sold, separated from their children, flogged and crucified. The Greeks probably obtained the idea of class from the fact that their tribes were led by more or less hereditary chiefs. Hence the better position of the women of the nobility.

That position manifests itself partly by freedom. In the days of Homer a married woman was not confined to the palace; Arete and Nausicaa walked about the town as much as they chose, and Nausicaa availed herself of her liberty to “happen to be about” when Ulysses was passing. Strange men had access to them; indeed, a stranger abducted Helen. Homer

tells us little of the position of the poorer women; those who are interested in the poorer woman will find some facts in Hesiod, who, however, wrote much later. To her the point of view is crude instead of brutal, for Hesiod says: "You must start with a house, a wife and an ox to plough." He also sheds a sharp light on the position of the wife by saying that a bad wife is one who tries to sit at meals with her husband.

As time went on the situation grew in some senses worse. The Greeks became more and more Asiatic as they formed colonies across the *Ægean* and drew from this the harem idea. Their women were not locked up, but they were supervised. However, there was a stirring among the women. A number of notable women seem to have arisen, the most distinguished being Sappho. She seems to have led a free republic or academy of women in the island of Lesbos. It is presumable that she revolted against the Oriental point of view, for we find her censuring a man for blushing as he makes a statement, instead of looking her straight in the face; again, she dares to attack her brother for falling in love with a woman of loose character. That is a very long way

from the Asiatic idea of the inferiority of woman.

All the same, what the women achieved was achieved in spite of Greek society. On the whole, the philosophers of Greece were contemptuous of anything feminine. We find Aristotle saying that "the relation of man to woman is that of the governor to the subject." Plato, a far gentler personality than Aristotle, and capable of conceiving relations between men and women more delicate than those of crude sex, cannot help showing the Greek through the philosopher. He says: "A woman's virtue may be summed up in a few words, for she has only to manage the house well, keeping what there is in it, and obeying her husband." Plato did not entirely despise women, for he considered that they had the same kind of intelligence as man, but in an inferior degree; he thought also that they were hampered by child-bearing, in which he agreed with his master Socrates. Plato approved the practice of Sparta, where boys and girls were co-educated, ran races and wrestled. It will indicate the extraordinary patchiness of Greek civilization to observe that while Sparta was giving girls this modern education, Athens thought the idea repulsive

and fit only for the barbarians of Lacedæmon.

It is difficult to sum up as to the status of woman in later Greece, because laws were often broken with impunity. To the end of their history the Greeks take back calmly women who have passed to other men; they put to death those who are unfaithful; they foster the courtesan by the side of the wife; they still treat women as cattle, for on his deathbed Pasion bequeathed his wife and a dowry to his friend Phormio; often the wife is betrothed to the dead husband's trustee. In that sense the Greeks do not go much beyond the Hebrews. But what they did was to introduce marriage ceremonies and rather clearer matrimonial laws. One may roughly say that while the Hebrews invented matrimony, it was the Greeks who invented marriage.

III.—The Greek Matron

That is an important fact: whereas in Judea marriage was a family matter, in Greece it was a public relationship. The State took some interest in it, even though the old Asiatic idea

still existed. An Athenian might not marry a woman who did not belong to an Athenian family; he might have her as a slave, but not as his legal wife. The Greeks felt for their legal wives a respect different from that which the Hebrews bore them; while the Hebrews were moral, the Greeks were formal.

All the same, the Greeks never gave up their masculine privileges; in cases of infidelity an Athenian was entitled to kill his wife and to sue her paramour for damages. Alternatively, automatic divorce followed, and the woman could be driven from the temple, accursed of the gods. This did not apply to the men, against whom no action could lie for unfaithfulness. In the later days of Athens, about 2,000 years ago, when woman had forced herself a little forward, it became possible for the wife to obtain a divorce and to recover her property. But discredit always attached to her, even if her husband was the guilty party. This should not surprise us too much, since in England and America, not more than thirty or forty years ago, a vague disgrace attached to the woman who divorced her guilty husband.

On the whole, the treatment of wives was still very coarse. It is true that Laertes resisted the

charms of Euryclea because he did not want to offend his wife, but in general Greek wives were liable to insults which did not affect the Hebrews. *Æsthetically* the Greeks were superior to the Hebrews, but morally they were inferior. For instance, we find Alcibiades bringing women of loose character so continually into the house that his wife, a lady of good family, had to take refuge with the official trustee of wives. She sued for a divorce; Alcibiades and his friends abducted her . . . but no action was taken against him. Alcibiades was much admired by his contemporaries, but often showed the vileness of his character; for instance, he bought a female Greek slave, thus enslaving one of his own country-women. Callias did still worse: he married a girl of good family, and within a year took her mother into his house as a second wife. The young wife tried to commit suicide, but was prevented, and was turned out of her own house by her mother. Andocides tells this pretty tale; it can be paralleled by many.

In extenuation it should be said that the Greek wife was a very poor creature. She might be taken at fifteen, or before, from a home where she had been sheltered, seeing no men,

hearing no discussions, acquiring no education, but learning only to weave and to cook. She was made into a housewife. In the days of the decadence she escaped a little, but in fact true power went to the courtesan.

IV.—Salvation by Courtesan.

It is one of the paradoxes of Greek life that the women who really counted were not the legal wives, but the courtesans. In Greek literature we find very few hints of educated wives; we discover, on the other hand, a number of educated courtesans, such as Aspasia, Lashenia (who studied under Plato), Leontion (pupil of Epicurus), Phryne (model of Phidias), Lais, etc. It would be impossible for a modern to understand the situation in Greece, notably in Athens, until he recalled that women of good family were so uneducated that no man could converse with them except about stewed fish or longcloth for his heir. Since it is an instinct in man that he should desire the society of women beautiful and intelligent, the Greek demand for something less stupid than the wife naturally arose.

In general the Greek courtesan was a foreigner or a freed slave. She had no social position to lose; therefore she went about freely, and she drew from the many philosophers and sages a great deal of education. A learned Greek might have ignored a female pupil, but he would not drive her away. The girl of good family would never have been allowed to hear Plato, so the courtesan acquired all the knowledge.

These women, towards the end of Imperial Greece, must have offered a strange Oriental spectacle, with their false hair, their high-heeled shoes, their rouge, and their pearl-powder. But it is not upon their beauty that they depended so much as upon their minds. That is to say, the more refined type of man, Socrates and Xenophon, visited the house of Aspasia, who also received ladies. It is rather significant that Xenophon should report that Aspasia lectured on the duties of husbands and wives and on the bettering of the social position of women. We find in her and in Sappho the first hints of feminine revolt; we gather it still more from the insults which Aristophanes throws at the suffragists of his period when he suggests that they want to go to the assembly in male clothing and to make the laws over their husbands' heads.

That is important ; it could not have happened in Judea. In Greece we find the first hint of woman stumbling on the road which she will find so long.

Aspasia seems to have been a remarkable woman. It is probable that she had sensible objections to the grossness of Greek religion ; the fact that Xenophon brought his wife to see her indicates that she must have had refined manners. The insults levelled at her in Greek literature are probably due to the fact that she was a Milesian, a stranger. Also, the old-fashioned wives naturally hated and envied her her great position.

Possibly, too, the general Greek attitude, one of contempt for women, interferes with our judgment of Aspasia ; the Greeks seem to have found it difficult to recognize the mental graces of women. Noble and pure as they may be, they continually suffer the abuse of the heroes of Euripides. It is true that Medea is revengeful, and Hermione frivolous, but they are exceptional ; most of them live the best lives they can ; Alceste is exquisite, Electra generous, and Phædra struggles as long as she can against a passion which has been forced upon her by Aphrodite.

Æsthetically, the Greeks appreciated their women. A vast literature of exquisitely turned lines shows that the Greeks felt for women a passion always æsthetic, and often refined. Take, for instance, the emotional *Laus Veneris* of Asclepiades : “ Sweet is snow in summer for one athirst to drink, and sweet for sailors after winter to see the Crown of spring ; but most sweet when one cloak hides two lovers, and the praise of Love is told by both.”

Again, *Love's Garland*, by Meleager : “ I will twine the white violet and I will twine the delicate narcissus with myrtle buds, and I will twine laughing lilies, and I will twine the sweet crocus, and I will twine therewithal the crimson hyacinth, and I will twine lovers' roses, that on balsam-curved Heliodora's temples my garland may shed its petals over the lovelocks of her hair.”

Lastly, one cannot forbear from quoting one of the love letters that have been left us by the Greeks :—

“ Rufinus to Elpis, my most sweet, greeting ; well be with thee, if thou canst be well away from me. No longer can I bear, no, by thine eyes, my solitary and unmated severance from thee, but evermore dabbled with tears I go to

Coressus or to the temple of the great Artemis ; but to-morrow my home shall receive me, and I will fly to thy face. Fare well ten thousand times.”

It is more difficult to sum up the Greek woman than the Hebraic, because our moral civilization is closer to Judea than it is to Olympus. We cannot ascribe to Greece much progress over Palestine ; we can only record that an obscure stirring among the Greek women was manifesting itself, that then was born the mysterious thing which some call progress, some decadence.

V.—*In Ancient Rome*

It is difficult to say what Rome contributed to the woman problem, because we cannot tell what Rome would have been without Athens. If Greek manners had not so greatly influenced the Roman, if the great Latin nation had not conquered the Greek cities, Rome might have produced a civilization of its own, and possibly have much improved upon the treatment of woman, which in Greece was bad. But in comparison with the Greeks the Romans were

a crude people, and they had a mania for imitating a people whom they could conquer but not absorb. The position of Rome was akin to that of Berlin in the middle of the eighteenth century, when Frederick the Great made himself ridiculous by creating a French Court, French palaces, French gardens, as if the honest German wild boar could tie up his muzzle with the pink ribbons of Versailles.

It may be that the Romans adopted Greek culture because they were a busy, official people; they had no time to create a culture of their own; Rome must have resembled Whitehall, or Washington. Thus the pride of the Romans must rest upon men of action, generals, officials, colonial administrators, etc., rather than on intellectuals. They regulated marriage and women more closely than did the Greeks, because they regulated everything. The Romans were profoundly municipal; they organized every activity, from the wearing of clothes to the worship of the gods. For this reason their treatment of women was less brutal than that of the passionate Greeks, but it was much colder, less inspired with passion, less likely to produce romantic beauty.

The reader should imagine Rome as a great

city of brick and marble, with good streets, some sort of police system, fine public buildings, filled with officials. The streets are busy; a great trade is conducted by carts mainly dragged by oxen; a number of fine ladies, carried in open litters by slaves, pass now and then as they go to visit their friends. There are great baths, more decorative, more luxurious than ours, deep porticos and broad piazzas to keep away the Italian sun.

The Romans are, to a certain extent, a civilized people, for they have learnt to eat with elegance, which is the first mark of good breeding. The well-to-do eat salads of lettuce or olives, the oysters of Lake Lucrinus, roast meat, fruit, pastry, honey. Sometimes, at a banquet, appears a roast peacock or a bowl filled with the tongues of nightingales. (How very Roman! One doubts whether a Greek would have eaten nightingales; rather might he have said, as Keats of the nightingale: "Thou wast not born for death, immortal Bird. No hungry generations tread thee down.") All this is washed down with draughts of the Falernian wine which Horace sings.

The manners vary from class to class. At one end the slaves, beaten, treated as cattle for

breeding purposes, sometimes valuable when they are skilful scribes or cooks ; gangs of slaves work the countryside. A little above them, the great masses of the people, free, living rather poorly, oppressed with taxes, powerless before the nobles, and cheered with circuses when there is no bread. (Within fifty years Rome suffered two famines and four pestilences.) At the other end, at the apex of Roman society, unrestrained luxury, purple and gold, the cult of Bacchus, the Roman orgy of woman and wine. Philosophical discussion took place at these banquets, which places them above the level of our own dinner-parties ; but when a Roman gentleman had eaten enough, he went outside to vomit, and came back to eat again. These strong contrasts give us an idea of the Roman society and indicate what Roman women had to contend against.

As regards women, the Romans seem to have been puritanic until the intoxication of empire spread from Spain to Turkey, swallowed up Northern Africa, fuddled their brains. Until then women were forbidden to drink wine ; according to Valerius Maximus, a man called Equatius Metellus killed his wife, whom he found at the wine cask. He was acquitted.

Fabius Pictor quotes a similar case of drastic prohibition. On the other hand, the early Romans seem to have had great respect for their womenkind. Immodest remarks must not be made before them; good form bade men give way to women in the street, and it is stated that even high officials adopted this custom. The early Romans carried puritanism into the home; wives were not to be kissed in presence of their daughters; indeed, Manlius was expelled from the senate for committing this crime.

VI.—*Lucretia*

It follows that in those early days woman held herself in high respect. The case of Lucretia reveals the point of view of some Roman matrons, mistaken but beautiful; it indicates that which Rome admired. Lucretia, a woman of high position, suffered tragedy. Let us quote the simple account of Dr. William Smith:—

“The king’s sons and their cousin Tarquinius Collatinus were feasting together; a dispute arose about the virtue of their wives. They mounted their horses to visit their homes by

surprise. They first went to Rome, where they surprised the king's daughters at a splendid banquet. Then they hastened to Collatia, and there, though it was late in the night, they found Lucretia, the wife of Collatinus, spinning amid her handmaids. The beauty and virtue of Lucretia excited the evil passions of Sextus. A few days after he returned to Collatia, where he was hospitably received by Lucretia as her husband's kinsman. In the dead of night he entered her chamber with a drawn sword, threatened that, if she did not yield to his desires, he would kill her and lay by her side a slave with his throat cut, and would declare that he had killed them both taken in adultery. Fear of such a shame forced Lucretia to consent; but, as soon as Sextus had departed, she sent for her husband and father. Collatinus came, accompanied by L. Brutus: her father, Lucretius, brought with him P. Valerius. They found her in an agony of sorrow. She told them what had happened, enjoined them to avenge her dishonour, and then stabbed herself to the heart."

One cannot suppose that all Roman matrons were the peers of Lucretia, any more than they would, like the mother of the Gracchi, call

their children their jewels. But here we find something cleaner, nobler, more modern than we could discover in Greece, where common sensuality was thinly veiled with an immortal art-muslin. All this was to disappear as Rome became Greek, Asiatic, as she grew intoxicated by wealth and power. One can imagine the fashionable matron in the days of Augustus. She wears a hood under which to smile, a cloak that moves in the wind. She is clad in a stola of fine wool which distinguishes her from the courtesans, who merely wear the toga. In her wardrobe are pleated symars, which clasp at the shoulder and leave an arm bare. White, crimson, and purple symars. The stola falls from her shoulders to reveal her tunic. The buskins which cover her feet are of fine leather bound in silver. Her hair is imprisoned in a net of precious metal; she has ear-rings of gold, chains, a collar of pearls. About her elbow clings a spinther bracelet; round her fingers are many cameo rings. Her face is covered with cosmetics; her eyebrows are painted; her skin is whitened with crushed pearls; or she imitates Poppæa, the wife of Nero, and bathes in the milk of she-asses. There is no good in her now; she is a figure of earthly passion; she heralds the

downfall of Rome; soon the barbarians, now at the gates, will overwhelm the Imperial City.

VII.—Rise in the Scale

The course of the Roman woman was much the same as that of the Greek, apart from the Roman organizing tendency and its benefits. She could not be a citizen, but she could be the patroness of a city, or see her statue erected if she gave money to a good cause. This contrast is not as strange as it seems, since in Great Britain, in 1919, a woman could not vote before the age of thirty, but could be elected to Parliament at twenty-one. The Romans were therefore not merely barbarous; they were incoherent, which is the natural fate of mankind. The Roman matron was theoretically a chattel of her husband, and was treated with cold respect; a great deal of money might be expended upon her, as to-day upon certain wives, but it was hardly good form to lavish upon a wife a grand passion that would be better employed elsewhere. In fact, she was proud, gossipy, and as luxurious as she could afford. Though very early in Roman history women

were forbidden to inherit property, little by little they acquired it, and this was tolerated. By the time Cæsar came to power, women were obtaining some education, not only in cooking and weaving, but in dancing, music, and the poems of Homer. Some Roman women attained distinction. Cornelia, the wife of Pompey, became prominent in mathematics, literature, and philosophy; Calpurnia, the wife of Pliny, set her husband's poems to music; this woman, and many of her circle, conducted an ideally faithful married life. In the circle of Seneca, who was an idealist and believed that women were equal to men, thus going further than Plato, lived a number of women, relatives and friends, such as Helvia, Paulina, and Marcia, who appear to have been intelligent, simple, and modest. Agrippina wrote memoirs which Tacitus condescended to use as an authority. The same applies to the courtesans, though in general they were much inferior to those of Greece: Lucian describes not only the beauty of Panthea, but her taste for music, poetry, politics, and argument.

A suggestion comes out of these facts: while nominally both in Greece and Rome the wife was intellectually unimportant, and the courtesan

dominant, in fact the Roman wife became much superior to the Greek wife. This does not involve a reflection upon the Greeks, for we must remember that Greece was conquered and crushed by Rome, and that the latter had another five hundred years in which to develop. But, in fact, the Roman attitude to woman, though confused, is a little more liberal than the Greek attitude. The Romans did much as the Greeks; they kept slaves whose marriage was not recognized as legal; their ears were bored, and their bodies were branded with hot irons for identification. (But, again, it is hardly sixty years since this practice existed in the Southern States of America.) The Romans also kept vestals, who took a thirty-year vow of chastity, who prayed, sacrificed, and served in the temple. If she broke her vow, a vestal was buried alive, while her paramour was lashed to death.

What matters in the idea of the vestal is the obscure recognition of some special quality in woman. The vestal was deeply respected; she served as an umpire in disputes; a criminal, on his way to execution, was pardoned if he met a vestal. In these ideas, in the deep shadow of man's instincts, hides the idea that a woman's purity is a valuable, and, in a sense, a sacred

thing. Thus the confused picture fades away, of a Rome of rich women, slaves and courtesans; most of the latter are freed slaves, who are clever and of no account. They crowd to the cult of Isis and to the bacchanal. They are gross and superstitious. But, all the same, love exists. Suetonius delightfully describes the passion of Acte for Nero. Acte flung her love at the feet of this criminal lunatic, this blown-out peacock, this coward stained with blood. In spite of Agrippina, his mother, and Poppæa, his wife, it was Acte who cared for his remains.

There is not only love; here in Rome, more than in Greece, we find woman fighting her way towards intellectual equality. We know her best through the people who attack her, through Epictetus, who laughs at the women dabbling in philosophy, and says with an easy sneer that what they appreciate in Plato is "the easiest way." We find it still more clearly in Juvenal, writing in the year 100 of our own time. The writer must quote a fragment of Dryden's translation of *Satire VI.* :

" You ask from whence proceed these monstrous crimes ?
 Once poor and therefore chaste, in former times
 Our matrons were : no luxury found room
 In low-roof'd houses, and bare walls of lome ;

Their hands with labour harden'd while 'twas light,
And frugal sleep supply'd the quiet night.
While pinch'd with want, their hunger held 'em
straight,
When Hannibal was hov'ring at the gate.
But wanton now, and lolling at our ease,
We suffer all the invet'rate ills of peace. . . ."

This recalls Mr. Rudyard Kipling, Dean Inge, Mrs. Katherine Fullerton Gerould, all the solemn figures of England and America, wailing over the modern girl; this modern girl who was abused in Ancient Rome, just as she is to-day. Still, it does not matter that Juvenal laughed at women; it is women who laugh last.

VIII.—*Marriage*

In virtue of their passion for organization, the Romans made of marriage a still more official matter than did the Greeks. They went as far as Sparta by fining bachelors, thus making marriage almost compulsory; also, they gave marks of distinction to married persons, partly because they wished to keep down libertinism, partly to multiply the number of citizens. They allocated to married persons seats in the theatre separate from those of the soldiers; married

magistrates were superior to bachelors; they were given preference when they competed for office. There was nothing moral in this idea; during the French Revolution a legend was created round the Roman virtues of courage, purity, justice; in fact, the Romans were much as other people, but they harboured the idea that marriage was a normal condition: their ambition being to make the world normal, they logically concluded that people must marry.

The marriage ceremony was much more complicated than any thought of by the Greeks; from the point of view of the present work that is their title to interest. Before the nuptials they consulted the augurs (prophetic priests) so as to be sure that the marriage was blessed by the gods. A number of days were unfortunate. Long conversations took place before the marriage was arranged, the bride being consulted only through her father. A contract was made, signed, and sealed by the parents on either side. In certain cases marriages were arranged by professional paid match-makers, and a vast number of inquiries were set up before two families allied. The Romans showed a certain modern spirit in marriage, by taking a stand against infant marriage, which still prevails in the

East ; Augustus forbade the making of marriage contracts until both parties were marriageable, except that a girl might be betrothed at ten and married at twelve. This is elementary, but very important ; at last here in Rome we find a hint of what we to-day call the age of consent. In practice the Roman girl was betrothed much later. She is still not consulted, but a dim protection is being given her ; a Roman child of thirteen would probably have an opinion, and if she was a beloved child she might have her way.

We have no space here for the complicated ceremonies of the nuptials, the parting of the bride's hair with the point of a spear, the iron wedding-ring, the eating of a cake made of wheat, salt, and water, etc. They are of no importance ; the only thing that matters is that they took place ; the existence of a marriage ceremony is a new fact. In certain cases there might be no ceremony, for the Romans held the Scottish point of view that if two persons live publicly as man and wife they are legally married ; marriage might also be contracted by public declaration. But this did not apply to families of position ; a patrician marrying a plebeian, which was allowed fairly early in Roman history, might proceed like this, but

persons of high position would have insisted on a complicated ceremony.

In theory the Romans were monogamous; in fact, the rule had certain exceptions. Practice varied, but at a certain time male bigamists might be branded with a hot iron. In the main they practised monogamy more than the Greeks; they were therefore instinctively travelling towards the Christian morality that was to come to them. In fact, they instituted a respect for wives which did not exist in Greece; they treated them as official wives; according to the early laws the wife inherited the husband's fortune if he died without making a will; when he left children the wife divided the property equally with them. The development of the Roman point of view as to property is shown by the Julian law, in which an unfaithful wife lost half her dowry, one-third of any other property, and was banished. This is important, for a more Oriental point of view than that of the Romans would have deprived the unfaithful wife of the whole of her estate. All the same, the Roman wife did not yet have a firm position. She might be well treated; she might attend the public festivals; she might even dine with her husband and his friends, which showed enormous progress

when we compare this with the Oriental harem system. But marriage itself was never secure for a Roman wife. She could be divorced very lightly. For instance, Pompey divorced Mucia by alleging an unfaithfulness which could not be proved; Cicero, after living for thirty years with Tarentia, divorced her to marry a young girl. Cato the Younger divorced Marcia so that his friend Hortensius might marry her. A woman could be divorced because she was childless, because she was disagreeable, for any reason. The Roman needed only to send a written notice: "Take away what belongs to you."

The only corrective is that women as well as men were allowed to obtain divorces, but, as in Greece, they suffered socially when they availed themselves of the law. They still lived in a society where woman was at a disadvantage, unless she was the daughter of a Roman citizen; even then she had not her full liberty. She lived in a world of agitation, war, and debauchery, in a city crowded with courtesans legally entered on the official registers; even the families of the emperors, women such as Messalina, entered into the turmoil. Long before Cæsar the matrimonial regulations were despised, the manners grew corrupt, and little by little the rigid attitude

of republican Rome was obscured by the Oriental pageantry of emperors, who kept their eyes fixed upon a sanguinary spectacle, the gilded chariots, the savage pleasures of the East, the fights in the arena between lions and men. It was not a world for woman to assert her rights, but rights came to her all the same, because the Romans, vicious and brutal as they might be, had a vision of an ordered world. Woman is weak; those beginnings of the ordered world began to give her a beginning of security. "Began to give a beginning": that is not much, but woman had to travel slowly along a road of which she did not yet see the end.

CHAPTER IV

LIGHT

I.—Christianity

WITHOUT possible denial, whether we consider woman or man, the coming of Christianity is the most important event in the whole of history. Other faiths not devoid of greatness, such as Buddhism, Brahmanism, Mohammedanism, have swayed scores of millions and have had lasting effects; these faiths endure, but none has had the faculty which we find in Christianity to adapt itself to the needs of the dominant race—namely, the white race. None has shown itself capable of evolution; they are to-day what they were on the day of their first preaching; the strength of Christianity lies in the fact that it was capable of the great movement which we call the Reformation, and that even to-day dissent and Modernism tend to alter it.

Christianity imposed itself first upon the Roman Empire, then upon the Barbarians, then

by degrees over the whole of the white world, because it was a live faith, and particularly because it was meeting a demand which the old faiths were dumb to. It is surprising that only three hundred years separate the outlawry of Christianity in Rome from the conversion of the Roman Emperor; three hundred years is a short time when it comes to changing the direction of man's spirit. He clings to old gods because he fears the new; therefore, there must have been in Christianity something infinitely appealing. In fact, when Christianity came to be preached in Asia Minor, in Rome, and in Greece, it found adherents because there was nothing to set against it. The old Roman world had ceased to believe in Mars, Venus, Jupiter, in those absurd divinities with faces and amours, capable of human jealousy and love. Society still sacrificed at the temples, but the pagan world did not inwardly believe. People visited the temples because it was the thing to do, because it was good form. This went so far that, repeatedly, when Christians were brought up before magistrates and summoned to recant the Christian faith, they were asked to raise no difficulties over details, told that nobody really wanted to persecute them; it was hinted to them that they

might as well sacrifice to the pagan gods, since the magistrate did not believe in them, since the court, the nobles, did not believe in them. Religion was then a mere formula.

The Christians were invincible because they did not look upon religion as a sort of respectable performance. The Christians did believe passionately that their faith had everything to do with their lives on earth and beyond the grave. They were willing to bear insult, poverty, and death. Nothing could shake their faith; there lay their strength when pitted against paganism, which was no stronger than scenery in a theatre. Christianity spread first among slaves, the poor, and the women. That because paganism was the smart faith, because the lowly, which included women, filled no place in the pagan scheme. Also they were wretched; slaves and women could be sold apart from their family, beaten, tortured, crucified, murdered; even the married woman had a mediocre status; a low-class Roman woman could be cast away by her husband, but she could not, in practice, obtain her liberty from him. And here was a faith which proclaimed that men and women were equal in the spirit, if not quite equal in the world; a faith which upheld permanent marriage,

which enforced upon men duties which until then had been enforced only upon women : Christianity was the first faith to proclaim that man should be faithful. Hence, in the early period, women gave themselves to Christianity with passionate zeal. Many acted as missionaries : Clothilde converted her husband King Clovis, the Frank ; Bertha of Kent and Gisela of Hungary introduced Christianity into their countries ; other women later converted the Duke of Poland and the Tsar Jarislav. Also, among women were numbered many saints.

The existence of the saints is an eloquent testimony to that early power of Christianity. The Bollandists have collected biographies of twenty-five thousand saints. But as these learned men rejected a great many saints as fraudulent, and as they examined only histories written in Latin, many scores of thousands of saints stayed unrecorded. The saint was a person who rejected this world for the sake of the next ; he or she led an ideal life, accepting poverty, solitude, insult, with complete aloofness. In a sense, they were knights in whose lives temptation replaced the dragon. They represented an idea which to-day makes social reformers ; they lived in hunger, darkness, and

filth, so as to give the people an example of contempt for the material world. What matters here is not the actual proceedings of the saints, but the fact that they could be produced, while Rome and Greece had produced mainly elegant cynics and brilliant intellectuals.

It should not be thought, however, that the effects of Christianity were generally felt from the beginning. For a lengthy period the Christians were socially outcast; moreover, though Christianity reached Rome in 63, it was established in Scotland only in 212, in France in 496, in Saxony in 785, in Russia in 940. In the tenth century Norway and Sweden were still pagan, while only after the Crusades, in 1227, did Christianity reach Prussia. It is amazing to think that the German tribes, which had been found polygamous by Tacitus, remained so up to the year 1249. Christianity travelled slowly; the faith, and the morals which go with it, spread only like a spot of oil, but where they spread they stayed.

Therefore, in studying the effects of early Christian society upon women, we must remember that conditions varied over hundreds of years, that Constantinople was Christian when the north of Europe had never heard the doctrine

preached. We must also remember that the early Christians made up a mixed society. Whereas the Hebrews were of one race, and kept themselves unmixed, the Christians were recruited all over the ancient world. Some were Hebrews, others Greeks, Romans, Phœnicians, Egyptians, Hungarians, Germans, Gauls, etc. Even Slavs, negroes from the north and centre of Africa, and ancient Britons were included. It follows that while these people lived the Christian life as well as they could, they did not at once throw aside the habits of centuries. A Greek and a wild Hun might both be Christians, but in the treatment of their women the traditions of their race operated. This should be borne in mind as we analyse marriage and the status of woman.

II.—Essential Idea

The essential idea of Christianity, from the spiritual point of view, we may leave aside, since all know to-day what is the Christian conception. For the purpose of the present study we are concerned rather with the effects of Christianity upon the morals of the period.

Before Christianity arose many moral lives, beautiful, chaste, self-sacrificing lives, were lived, particularly among the Greeks; but never before had there been a massed effort for the maintenance of good morals. Early in the first century there was a strong reaction against the vices of Roman society; Musonius was particularly virulent in this regard. But the Christians were more definite. One of the most active, Chrysostom, born at Antioch, pupil of a sophist, became a Christian and a hermit for ten years. Eventually, as Archbishop of Constantinople, he dared to deliver violent sermons against the licence of the Imperial Court. He protested against the sale of girl slaves, and was able to reduce the traffic; he even ventured to attack the morals of the monks who had elected him. All through the history of Christianity we find this puritan insistence upon the clean life. St. Adalbert, and, later, the monk Pamphil, made it their lives' work to repress immorality in Bohemia; generally speaking, the bishops, while tolerating marriage, compelled the faithful to develop in their union the spiritual rather than the physical side. The Christian point of view was not absolutely novel; it was a restatement of the idea of the vestal, which has existed, not

only in the Roman Empire, but in Mexico, in Persia, in the Canaries, etc. Before Christianity came, the Hebrew Essenes held the ascetic view, but it was Christianity that generalized that view.

Naturally, people such as the Christians, with an entirely new doctrine, could not help being narrow; their merit, however, was that they excluded nobody from their society. Whereas the Hebrews looked upon non-Hebrews as unclean, the early Christians accepted as equals all men and women who adopted Christianity. That showed much progress. In regard to woman, it can be said that Christianity first established a sort of spiritual democracy. The Christians had the strength of the Hebrew moral law, the Hebrew zeal and discipline, but they were not chained up within their own faith; they did not to Christians restrict salvation; they held it out to any race, to rich or poor, to great or lowly.

The desire to convert and to save had profound effects upon early Christian life. On the whole it was pure, and that for two reasons. First, the would-be Christian man or woman could not be admitted unless past sins were repented. This meant that penance must be done in the shape

of an absolutely pure life. The second reason was that to convert you must practise; an early Christian had to give the good example, and this forced upon him purity of living. Many opponents of Christianity have pointed out that among the early Christians were a number of criminals; this is true, but what actually happened is that criminals touched by the spirit were unable to obtain comfort from paganism, whereas Christianity could forgive and restore them, so that eventually some of these criminals became saints. One may sum up this spirit of forgiveness and purity by saying that in Latin and Greek literature there was not the slightest sense of the beauty of pure living. The Christians, on the other hand, felt that passion soiled and lowered them, that the temple of the body was a fit place for the sacrifice of all impulses they considered vile. The early Christians went too far; their asceticism, due to the fact that they despised the earthly life, led them to turn away from beauty and from love, but that was a necessary stage; they must not be too hardly thought of because they exceeded in virtue in a world that exceeded in vice.

III.—The Position of Woman

One of the peculiar aspects of early Christianity is that the Christians felt at the same time a great contempt and a great respect for women. This has led to considerable misunderstanding. It is not always remembered that though a man might be a Christian, he might also be an African or a Slav. Theoretically, the Christians intended to treat women far better than had done the ancient world; it was not to be expected that they should live up absolutely to their higher ideals. The Christians inherited the Asiatic point of view on women; they could not help it, for there was no other point of view. A good deal of the spirit of the early Christians can be found in Ecclesiasticus (son of Sirach), who flourished about 200 B.C. Ecclesiasticus enjoins upon man not to be jealous of his wife, but to keep his soul from her. He is to beware of a woman who sings. He is to turn away his eyes from a beautiful woman, because beauty is a snare. He is not to look upon another man's wife. He is to fear wine and woman. Ecclesiasticus manifestly hates and fears woman. He says that all wickedness is

little to the wickedness of a woman (presumably any woman); that a talkative woman is a weariness; that woman is merely a reward or a punishment. We find this repeated in Ecclesiastes, who describes woman as a danger whom the righteous man escapes. He can find a good man in a thousand, but not one woman.

All this is pre-Christian, but it colours the Christian point of view. Nearly all the Christian masters look upon woman as a danger, and for that reason only come to detest her. Thus we find Tertullian : “ Woman, thou oughtest always to walk in mourning and rags, thine eyes filled with tears of repentance.” The point of view survives even to the year 1100, when we find in Marbod (Bishop of Rennes) as follows : “ Woman, sweet torment, honeycomb and poison draught alike, smearing the sword with honey, pierces the heart even of wise men. Who was it that persuaded our first parent to taste forbidden fruit? Woman. Who was it who compelled her daughters to spoil their lives? Woman. Who was it who ruined the strong man after depriving him of his hair? Woman. Who was it who cut off the priestly head of the man guiltless of crime? Woman.” One might multiply these examples indefinitely. The early

Christian still held the old Hebrew, Greek, and Roman idea that the human race was man, while woman was an appendage, a sort of sub-man. Moreover, the Christians could not close their eyes to the attractiveness of woman; the glow of her eyes, the sheen of her hair, the smile of her red lips, the winning quality of her tears, the stimulating nature of her pride, everything that is delicious in the creature, everything that is intoxicating, represented to them only one of the traps of the world. Woman was the impediment, the temptation they must overcome, the relentless enemy actuated by the devil, destined to procure their downfall. They find it difficult to hate her, for they love her; but they find it easy to hate her, for they fear her.

The early Christians were clear that man contained within himself some spark of divinity, that he was the glory of the spirit, while woman contained only something of man; that she was further removed from the divine spark; that she was glorious to man and not to the spirit. They considered that woman was created for man, for his comfort and service; therefore man was the natural spiritual guide of woman; she must submit to him, and all his duty was to love her. Nothing of this is particularly Christian;

it is merely Asiatic and ancient. Where the Christians differed from the rest of the ancient world was in recognizing the humanity of woman. For instance, they did not deny that inspiration could come to woman as well as to man ; the early Christian government consisted in assemblies of the faithful ; in those assemblies a woman who considered herself inspired could stand up, speak, and be listened to with respect. This continued until the assemblies began to elect priests, and until bishops were appointed. The creation of a close government among the early Christians reduced woman once more to the inferior position, but in the early period she was looked upon as spiritually equal ; her sainthood was accepted ; she was courteously mentioned in the letters of missionaries. One may therefore sum up the position of woman in Christian society as one of inferiority infused with hope. Greece and Rome imagined a future life, under the name of the Elysian Fields, where only men were admitted ; the early Christians figured an after-life devoid of materialism, where men and women should no longer be men and women, but creatures of the spirit, therefore equal in so far as there could be equality where there was neither power nor obedience, no great, no lowly, nothing

but the divine flicker. The writer will attempt to show in the following section what was the material point of view as to woman in marriage, but he may here assert that, from the spiritual point of view, the position of woman was immensely raised by the theory that in the spiritual realm sex could not impede her; it was a heavy shackle the Christians thus struck off limbs which had been chained for many centuries.

IV.—Marriage

As regards marriage, the Christians brought in three points of view which were entirely new, and which affected woman profoundly. The first idea was that marriage was undesirable; the second, that if marriage were contracted it could never be dissolved; the third was monogamy, the idea that no man may have more than one wife.

Bearing in mind the first three chapters of this work, the reader will realize what a revolution such ideas were destined to bring about in the position of woman. Before the first Christian missionary speaks we are in the darkest depths of antiquity; a few years later, we discover marriage

more or less what it is to-day. With Christianity we leap from antiquity into modernity ; “ woman the slave ” turns into “ woman.” This does not mean that Christianity released woman from her old thralls, but Christianity altered the idea of marriage. Curiously enough, the Christians created marriage as a new institution while strongly objecting to its being contracted at all. The Christian theory being that all the pleasures of the world were evil, that the world was to last only a few years, and then to be destroyed, it was natural that they should think it, not only evil, but absurd to continue the race. The natural course of all pious men was to prepare their souls for the coming account. In other words, marriage did not enter into the Christian conception of eternity. On the other hand, the Christian leaders realized that the highest life is not always suitable for the lowest men ; they saw that a rule made too hard would soon be broken ; they came to realize that there might be a natural way of living, less noble than the spiritual life, but all the same a way which was not necessarily vile.

Some of the Christian Fathers naturally held the extreme view. For instance, we find Jerome saying : “ Marriage is at best a vice.” Origen :

“Marriage is unholy and unclean.” Some of the sects were stricter than the main body of Christians; the Marcionites, for instance, prohibited marriage entirely, and refused to baptize those who were married. These points of view were generally held, so much so that whereas Rome could with difficulty maintain six vestals, the Christians found thousands to keep their vows. The inflaming quality of the Christian vow produced female saints as well as male. This is important, for before Christianity a woman such as Deborah, or Aspasia, could have power, but she could not have equal spiritual rank. The lives of the saints are full of cases such as that of Thecla, at whose feet the ravening lions lay, respecting her sacred character.

However, little by little, as Christianity spread, and as marriage became accepted, considerable discussion took place, and a party grew up to tolerate marriage. In the fourth century, the Council of Gangra laid down that celibacy was preferable, but declared that marriage did not necessarily stand in the way of salvation. The old point of view still stood, for the Council excommunicated Jovinian because he denied the superior merit of celibacy, but it afforded to marriage a sort of legal toleration. Marriage

remained an expedient, but it was a legal expedient.

Moreover, at first there was no clear distinction between the priest and his flock; therefore, at first priests were not necessarily celibates; the celibacy of priests developed slowly; at first, they were forbidden to re-marry after the death of their wives, and they were not allowed to marry widows; in the fourth century, the synod of Elvira, while tolerating the marriage of the inferior priests, imposed celibacy upon prelates. It was left to Gregory VII. to impose celibacy on priests of all ranks. And even so there was much resistance, so that celibacy did not actually come into force until the thirteenth century. Celibacy was enjoined upon priests so as to create a special character for them by enforcing upon them an unusual way of living; this espoused the point of view of Thomas Aquinas, who did not condemn marriage, but looked upon it as an impediment to salvation, because it took the love and energy of a man for the service of the earth.

This part of the Christian revolution was not altogether beneficial to woman. While it was laid down that woman is a temptation and a snare to men, it was not made clear that man is a snare and a temptation to woman. The preaching of

celibacy, while it did not lower the position of woman, did nothing to raise it. She remained a danger. The idea which did raise the position of woman was the establishment of monogamy. Until the Christians came, all over the world men had had several wives and favourites ; the wife was a chattel. Under the Christian code the wife, with the man, formed one complete spiritual whole. The Christians did not make a formal declaration of this fact, but as they did not practise polygamy, little by little "one man one wife" became the rule. There were a few exceptions. We find in the sixth century an Irish king with two wives ; there are records of polygamous Frankish kings, but, in the main, the tendency grew to restrict one man to one wife. The effects upon woman were notable. She could no longer, as she grew old, find herself replaced by a young woman ; she did not have to submit to a lowering of her position ; she was not merely a legal wife ; she was "the wife." What power this must have given her in the Christian household is easy to imagine.

Lastly the question of divorce arose, and its solution did still more to strengthen the position of woman. The early Christians not only looked upon marriage as indissoluble, but even took a

line against re-marriage after widowhood. This latter point of view did not endure, but under the Christian rule it became impossible for a man to put away his wife. Even when the husband or wife of a Christian was an unbeliever, he or she could not be put away. By degrees the rule formed that marriage after widowhood was allowed, but that while one party remained alive neither might marry again. There were fluctuations; inevitably the powerful escaped the stricter rules; it may be said, however, that after St. Augustine organized the Church, divorce and remarriage ceased to exist. In later days, the Christians did not maintain so completely the strictness of their rules. Possibly making allowances for human nature, the Council of Trent allowed annulment of marriage, in certain cases, by decree of the Pope. But this was in the sixteenth century, when considerable changes had taken place in the Christian organization, when it did not compare in the least with that of the Christian Fathers. One may sum up by saying that, throughout the early centuries of Christianity, married persons might separate, but divorce they might not.

The effect upon woman is easily understood. The one who divorces, the one who has the right

and who abuses his power, has always been man ; this situation endured perhaps until the year 1860. Until Christianity came, the one who had to lose by divorce was woman, because after divorce she lost her social position, while man did not ; sometimes she lost even the means of living, and became practically a slave. Strict marriage protects women, while divorce (until recently) has been the servant of man's fickleness. By establishing permanent marriage, Christianity raised woman almost to a position of material equality.

V.—The Christian Life

Though, no doubt, a certain number of Christians were shallow, or used the faith dishonestly for their advancement, on the whole the early Christians established a life which could serve as a model in a period such as theirs. They respected the marriage bond almost superstitiously ; their theory of fidelity was so extreme that Constantine established the death penalty in cases of unfaithfulness, a penalty to be applied not only to women, but to men. This penalty did not often have to be applied, for the

Christians, long before Emperor Constantine, had used exclusion against any of their number who fell into sin. One may imagine that most Christians practised the virtues of purity, sobriety, economy, and temperance. Being zealous missionaries, intensely desiring to draw into their community the surrounding heathens, they practised these virtues so as to give an example: they practised them with a strange, fierce pride; they took pride even in their Christian humility. And pride, not being an evil thing, tended to develop their virtues. Almost invariably, they dealt fairly in business, even with a pagan. They lived so far as they could as an ideal community; in fact, in the first century, they held even their property in common, and sold all they had to share it among their fellow-Christians. By degrees, of course, as the system hardened, community of property ceased, but it took on the form of large gifts to the Church. Especially during the confusion of the fourth century, when the Barbarians were swarming at the gates of Rome, large properties went to the Church, and laid the basis of the clerical power that was to dominate the Middle Ages.

One may ask oneself how it is that people

living so soberly and so cleanly could have become unpopular and persecuted. The reason is that the ascetic Christian idea was deeply repulsive to the unbridled luxury and licentiousness of ancient Rome. The Christians, by drawing away from paganism, drew away from the convivial life of Rome. Since it was usual to invoke the pagan gods, Christians avoided social life, and did not attend the circus; they detested pagan art, pagan poetry, pagan eloquence. Because they rejected the pagan gods, they automatically became puritans. They even refused to take part in the Roman festivals because these were under the patronage of idolatrous gods. Broadly speaking, the Christians were against any knowledge which did not contribute to salvation; they objected to lightness of speech, which is natural enough since they expected a short tenure of life, but this made them unsociable. They looked upon all beauty as sensuality, and so they detested it. We find the Fathers denouncing coloured garments, musical instruments, gold vases, white bread, foreign wines, warm baths, public salutations. They detested every thing which flatters the body, thus laying themselves open to the taunt by the Roman aristocracy that the poor

found sanctity rather than the rich. This was untrue, for many patricians became Christians, but it explains to a certain extent why Rome so detested and persecuted the Christians. There were also other reasons: since the Christians looked upon themselves as denizens of an unearthly realm, they refused to accept civil or military functions under the pagan government. All their patriotism went to their Church, all their ambition to the desire to rise in its ranks. It should also be remembered that the early Christians could not quite throw off their humanity; they tended to gloat rather tactlessly over their own nobility; Tertullian wrote a long treatise, detailing the tortures which the pagans would endure in the after-life; the early Christians were very fond of developing this subject to the pagans, who naturally resented it and persecuted them, partly because they were different, partly because they assumed a superior attitude.

Still, there is something ideal and charming about those clean, sober lives. The early Christian was not a learned man; he believed in evil spirits, and continually saw himself pursued by demons, taking the form of temptations; he believed himself subject to visions; he accepted

miraculous healing; he made a mystic background to his home life. The early Christian was the child of his period, so he could not help being superstitious. But he did make an island of upward striving among the filth and horror of antiquity; he was bitter perhaps, gloomy for sure, but he was trying; with halting step and blind eyes, without any tradition behind him, he was trying to make for himself and his woman-kind an atmosphere of purity, sobriety, and courage.

VI.—*The Dark Ages*

Time went on, Rome fell. The Barbarians from Germany swarmed over France, Italy, Spain, into Africa, burning and massacring. Before them culture went up in flames; knowledge disappeared; a great era of brutality came; little by little, from the year 400 up to the year 1000, all that had been done for the civilization of mankind disappeared. Art, philosophy, learning, the Imperial organization of Rome, all this vanished under a red tide of maddened peasants from the far North. Dean Inge says, very rightly, that the Middle Ages were "the longest and dreariest setback that humanity has

ever experienced during the historical period.” It is usually held that the Middle Ages extend from the year 400 to the year 1500. They begin with the Barbarian tide that engulfed culture; they end with the Renaissance, art, the discovery of America, of the Cape, with the science and adventure which cast a new light upon the world. But inside the Middle Ages are different periods. Whereas from the year 1200 onwards there is a revival of learning, actually a renaissance, from the year 400 onwards, and for eight centuries, there is nothing but the blackest ignorance, except—and that is why the writer connects the early Middle Ages with Christianity—except among the monks. These early Middle Ages, ground under the heel of feudal lords, were saved for the future culture by the existence of the Christian Church. It was the early Catholic Church which kept alive in monasteries the little flicker that the Renaissance and the Reformation were to blow up into a great flame of philosophy and of art.

The Church here had a difficult task to perform, not only for culture, but to maintain for woman the liberal conquests that had been made. They had to deal with the Goths, the

Wisigoths, the Burgunds, the Vandals, later with the Huns, the Avars, savage hordes from the Danube and the Vistula. These Goths were tall, high-cheekboned; they had red hair and beards, or yellow hair, which they twisted into strange shapes; they wore white linen leggings strapped with thongs of deerskin; upon their breasts cuirasses of leather, upon their shoulders bearskin cloaks. They worshipped Wotan, Freya, Loge, the savage deities of the Nibelungen; they swept into the South, led by the Valkyries, in an epic already Wagnerian. They were ignorant, they were brutal, they were cruel, but they were not altogether an evil people. According to Tacitus, the marriages of these Barbarians were very strict; they punished infidelity by death, though naturally more tolerant to men than to women. They tended to be morally severe; there was not among the Goths the vicious joking that prevailed among the Romans. They were rather akin to the Red Indians, for their women were enslaved; they did most of the work, while their men hunted, drank, gambled; these had no place in the councils; only later, as the Barbarians were Christianized, did woman become capable of inheriting; their point of view was expressed by

the fact that when a child was born to them they had a right to a contribution from the common stock; when a girl was born the amount paid was less than for a boy.

The stock of these Barbarians was cleaner, finer, than the decayed stocks of Greece and Rome. Christianity bit slowly into the Barbarians, but when it captured them they became loyal and made as good Christians as those who had gone before. They were capable of liberalism, and it is to the glory of the Franks that they were willing to allow women divorce equally with men. Little by little, they were absorbed in the Christian organization. In fact, Christianity replaced the Roman Empire in the West; it was the only organized body which survived the Barbarian rush, and came to predominate. After the year 600, most of France, Spain, Italy, was Christian and dominated by the Church. Morals, trade, politics, social life, everything fell under the Church. As the Western world became more and more separated from Constantinople, the Western Church ruled as a master over feeble kings; by 1054 the Pope became sole Patriarch of the West. Of the East we need say nothing, because there chaos was impending. Here, too,

the Barbarians, Slavs, and Turks were drawing near. Christianity had become the official Church, and in so doing had lost its austerity. There was no more persecution, but many prelates lived vile lives—lives of corruption and intrigue; the Court influenced the Church councils; there was lobbying and intriguing for clerical offices; rich women, who had paid for almshouses, hospitals, or orphan homes, influenced the bishops, and gave to preachers a fashionable booming; the society woman in Constantinople was not very different from the society woman of our own day. Therefore, while the East went into decay, Christianity drooped. The changes in the position of woman developed exclusively in Western Europe. The Christian policy towards the Barbarians was wise; instead of resisting, Christianity absorbed them. In spite of Tertullian, it encouraged marriage with the pagans, so as to propagate the faith; only when Christianity was firmly established did it forbid unions with the heathens. The decretum of Gratian made such marriages impossible except under dispensation, but, in fact, by the year 1000, Western Europe was so completely Christian that the heathen found it advisable to accept the faith.

As regards the position of woman at that time, we find conflicting facts. The Barbarian Christians, without creating anything very new, had brought from their tribes a flicker of liberalism which produced another change in the position of woman: they developed some faint idea that a girl must be consulted before she accepted a husband. Here was something that the early Christians did not know, and here, therefore, is another step in the advancement of woman. The early Christians were content with the consent of the girl's parents, but in 560, the Barbarian King Clothaire I. prohibited the forcing of women into marriage. In the tenth century the Anglo-Saxons required the girl's consent before the marriage could be solemnized. Naturally, these rules were not absolutely applied; a girl and her property were still disposed of without her actual consent; round about the tenth century a girl was not usually married without her consent, but as she could be imprisoned in a tower, fed on bread and water, and whipped until she did consent, she was not legally much protected. The one thing that matters in the present study is that at last an idea developed that the girl might have something to say as to the disposal of her person.

The position of woman was tragic in the early Middle Ages, a period solely filled with strife; kings warring against each other, free towns defending themselves against armies of bandits; Vikings from Norway, Magyars in Hungary, Saracens in the Mediterranean, Slavs in Germany, were spreading war, famine, pestilence, and pillage. Between the year 700 and the year 1000 the world was one great theatre infested with raiders on land and sea where abbeys were plundered, towns were sacked. And to make the case worse, the Arabs, carrying the flag of Islam, came raging through the North of Africa into Spain, and even into France. As an answer arose the free towns, and especially the feudal system. The first feudal lords were the reply to the invader; someone had to hold him at bay, so men marshalled themselves under leaders, mainly for protection. These great lords contributed the knights for the Crusades; they established a sort of peace, but their tyranny was intense. Indeed, just then, the situation of woman was lower than it had been for a thousand years. The lord of the manor could force a girl of fourteen to marry; he could choose a husband for her and throw her into his arms; an absurd story runs that he even had the right to take her

as his favourite ; in fact, this is not true, but he could forbid her to marry unless payment was made. She was reduced to the status of the beast ; the most natural desires of her life were ruled with an iron hand by the nobleman who protected her against the invader : against him she was defenceless. Meanwhile, he, the powerful, made his terms with a Church that was no longer democratic. Though divorce did not exist, dispensation and annulment did. The rich man and the strong man managed to exist safely in this period of terror and of chaos. The rich man could ; the rich woman could not yet. We shall see in the next chapter that it would take time before she could recover her conquests. If the rich woman stood so low, the reader will conceive to what wretched conditions was reduced the woman that was born poor.

CHAPTER V

REBIRTH

I.—The Renaissance

MANY general histories, when dealing with the Renaissance, with that stream of learning and of art which spread over Europe between 1400 and 1600, tend to deceive the reader. They lead him to think that an outburst of civilization suddenly took place, as if a flower had grown out of the dirt and superstition of the Middle Ages within the confines of a single night. Notably, they suggest that the Renaissance was due to the taking of Constantinople by the Turks in 1453, as a result of which the Greek intellectuals fled to Italy, and began the great movement by introducing culture into barbarian Western Europe.

Now it is certainly true that the flight of the Greek scholars greatly stimulated the culture of Western Europe, but that culture already existed; Europe was, on the whole, brutal and

ignorant, but culture had already lifted its head, sometimes at the court of a king, more often in the castle of a great nobleman, still more often in a monastery. Culture was almost submerged, but the monasteries notably had continued to copy Greek and Latin manuscripts, because the monasteries alone afforded education; only by means of the Greek and Latin classics could the monks give a young nobleman or priest an education. Also, the troubadours had gone from castle to castle between the eleventh and the thirteenth centuries, composing and singing poetry that was not always good, but which did embody an artistic aspiration. In this sense, the Renaissance began round about the year 1100, when the dark cloud of the early Middle Ages began a little to lift. For three hundred years art and learning went slowly, and that is why, when we say "Renaissance," we mean, on the whole, the fifteenth century. During the previous centuries the power of the Church had slightly decayed; the crusades had brought Europeans in touch with more educated Arabs and Greeks; these brought back information which stimulated the intellectual forces. As printing was invented and books could be obtained, asceticism went out of fashion; finally,

the exploration of the world, which began with Columbus, Cabot, Vasco da Gama, and went on to Sir Walter Raleigh, poured into the ears of young men and women the heady wine of romance. So there was thinking and there was discussing; in spite of the Inquisition there was even dissent.

II.—The Troubadours

The rise of the troubadours profoundly affects an analysis of the story of woman. Until they came, such barbarian singers as existed sang mainly of war; the troubadours sang mainly of love. The reader will appreciate what an important fact this is; the troubadours brought woman, her characteristics, her relation to man, into the light. Before, however, detailing the action of the troubadours, it is well to say what they were. The troubadour was a poet who wandered from castles to courts singing the songs he composed; he took with him a musician called joglar; generally, he belonged to the gentleman class; noblemen, knights, and even kings were troubadours; they numbered Alfonso II. of Aragon and Richard Cœur de Lion.

Some were of humbler birth, merchants, clerks, but always men of a certain culture. The troubadour movement spread over the whole of France, Switzerland, Italy, and Northern Spain; it had a certain influence on England, and more on the Minnesingers of Germany. The democratic character of the institution will be realized as we note that seventeen women are recorded troubadours. This, again, is important, for these women affronted a prejudice against women so strong that even in the days of Shakespeare there were no female actresses: the female parts were taken by boys.

The burden of the song was love. The troubadour usually chose a lady of rank as the recipient of his platonic strains; this lady was generally married, for the unmarried girl was of no importance—little more than charming cattle. Thus the troubadour became the vassal of the lady he loved: no longer did he look upon himself as her master. There is nothing sensuous, nothing sacramental in this relation; the worship of the troubadour was æsthetic and emotional. The man placed himself at the woman's feet in a way that no Roman or Greek could have done; the troubadour set up the important point of view that love ennobles the lover. This must

necessarily have affected the status of woman; she was being given the superior position.

Many of the troubadours have left charming lines. For instance, Arnaut de Mareuil sings to Adelaide: "Great fear and apprehension come upon me, so that I dare not tell you, Lady, that it is I who sing to you."

On the other hand, some rebel against worship. For instance, Marcabrun: "Love is of a detestable lineage; he has killed thousands of men without a sword." One troubadour, Guiraut de Bornhel, even indulges in psychology, and analyses the nature of love.

What did all this tend to? How did it affect woman? It raised her; it raised the feminine idea; it made of woman no longer a property to control, but an ideal towards which to look. It was these wandering poets who first timidly set up the idea of romance. Some of their delicacy passed from poetry into the daily life of as coarse and brutal nobles as history has known. The point of view was expressed by Geoffrey de Charny, who set up the duty of a knight: "Be faithful to your God, your sword . . . and your lady." To an extent, this was accepted, and notable things were done; for instance, in 1356, Marshall Clermont and John Chandos

fought for a lady's badge; at Meaux, in 1358, the nobles mobilized to defend ladies threatened by a riot; for the sake of a princess of Wales, the ransom of a prisoner was reduced to fifty thousand crowns. Edward III. spared Edinburgh to please Lady Douglas; again, he spared the burghers of Calais on the prayer of his wife, Philippa. What is interesting is that Edward III. surrendered to these ladies, growling and churlish, as if he held vaguely that he ought, but did not want to let them have their way. It is also worth recording that a woman did not yet know how she would be treated. Philippa might beg off prisoners, but her husband did not hesitate to imprison his mother for twenty-eight years. Yet again, when the Prince of Wales took Limoges, he caused not only men, but women and children to be slain. All this is recorded in Froissart, though he is by temperament an aristocrat; he despises the lowly, and sees no wrong in their oppression; still, his chronicles are eloquent and exciting. He sees a world where gentlemanly behaviour is springing up; men are still bad; princes and nobles are faithless; in war they are debauched and venal; most of chivalry is verbal. Within families unrebuked murder furthers ambition;

in peace, as in war, few men abstain from treachery. It is a naïve period, a period of formation, where the most important fact is a gentlemanly manner hiding most ungentlemanly behaviour. Indeed, the chronicler, Commines, writes the epitaph of the period in six cynical words: "Those who succeed always have honour."

So much for the woman of rank. She did not yet hold her rights; she might be treated with the most amazing brutality; when her lord went to the crusades, she might be locked up in a tower for seven years; or, again, she might live a long life, respected and adored. As for the woman of lower rank, the picture is one of unrelieved horror; she is still beaten, overworked, practically sold; she is never sure of her liberty or her virtue. Christianity has become political, so the prelates stand in with the nobles, and cease to protect woman; the best Christianity can do is to admit her to the nunneries, into which she crowds to escape the horror of the outer world. Again, it is Commines who sums up the position of the lowly woman in those later Middle Ages: "If a poor man have a beautiful daughter or wife, he will do wisely to guard her well."

III.—Manners and Morals

By degrees, chivalry decays; there are no more crusades; powerful kings arise in France, in Spain, in Austria; these kings establish a rough sort of order; the nobles are no longer beyond restraint; a few cities grow rich and establish security. In 1500, the world is still full of war, but in large areas a sort of peace prevails; thus culture rises, and woman once more can lift her head. Woman is the first to pay the price of war, and now she is the last to enjoy the fruits of peace. Broadly speaking, during the real Renaissance (Italy 1450, France 1500, England 1550), the attitude to woman is one of the frankest, though elegant, immorality. The document which most precisely shows the conditions is *The Decameron*, by Boccaccio, located in 1348. Boccaccio, a man of culture, was one of the earliest members of the Renaissance. He wrote his tales, partly for his own amusement, partly for that of his beloved Maria d'Aquino. It is an extraordinary book, a collection of one hundred stories. During the plague of Florence, a party of ladies and gentle-

men flee the disease, and tell tales to beguile the tedium of exile. Hardly one of the tales fails to bring a blush into the cheeks of the modest; there is much talk of virtue, but much more fear of scandal; continually, the characters parade their piety; continually, the ladies who listen to the stories show mild offence before coarse expressions, but they do not go away: they hear the tale to the end. They are deeply romantic; they weep over young love, but they assume as facts of nature vice in the nunnery, the monastery, the palace, and the hovel. They take life as justified by itself, by the pursuit of love. They approve virtue, but they do not censure vice.

One may suppose that these ladies are representative of refined women in the days of Boccaccio. They seem to have assumed that the flesh is weak, to regret that weakness, and to acknowledge that virtue cannot be strengthened. These ladies are polished, cultured; they are completely sceptical as to morals, so long as the outside is kept fair. Also, they are still subservient; in the preface, Boccaccio causes one lady, when deciding to set out on the journey, to say to another: "We are but women; nor is any of us so ignorant

not to know how little able we shall be to conduct such an affair, without some man to help us." They are graceful, and they are dependent. They are romantic weeds blown in the wind, of whom Boccaccio sceptically remarks that they may envy those weaker sisters whom they choose, however, to reprove.

We have another document of the same kind, which the writer thinks it advisable to quote, because it confirms Boccaccio, and therefore strengthens the likelihood that the women of Boccaccio were the educated women of Europe in 1348. This document is a book of tales by Marguerite de Navarre, entitled *The Heptameron*, written in the early part of the sixteenth century, during the French Renaissance. Here a group of ladies and gentlemen tell tales while waiting for a bridge to be built over a river. What is interesting is that after each tale (which is frankly immoral) a lengthy debate on the right and wrong of it is conducted by the company. All the ladies make a great parade of piety, and yet not one of them turns away from the vicious tales; they stress the duty of religious observance and the duty of virtue, but one feels that this is external, that religion has become a formality. A few points taken from the dis-

cussions show the feminine point of view at that time. At one place: "All women are fallible provided man is persistent and subtle." At another, the art of love is defined by a lady as "it is the business of all women to torment, kill and damn man." These women state themselves willing to practise fidelity, but they consider themselves released when their mate fails to keep his vows. One of the disputants sums up womankind in the following sweeping manner: "I must run back through all the years of my life to find *one* woman whose virtue can belie the bad opinion man has of her." Finally, the poor opinion that woman has of herself is summarized by Madame Oisille. Following on a story which ridicules a Franciscan monk, Madame Nomerfide says that she had rather be flung into a river than be loved by a Franciscan. Madame Oisille brutally replies that "No doubt Madame Nomerfide can swim."

During the Renaissance, especially in the merchant class, many completely commonplace lives were lived as they are to-day, but the general slant is defined by *The Decameron* and *The Heptameron*. Woman is less moral, perhaps, than she was some centuries before:

that is because she is freer, because she is treated as an equal; she is making poor use of her liberty, proving herself flippant, hypocritical, and light. That is inevitable when freedom comes; what matters to us is that this romantic and emotional freedom at last exists. Time still separates woman from civil rights and economic power, but now she is a long way from the squaw, dragged by the hair, her cries unheeded.

Woman was benefiting by the stir of the period; the Renaissance is as great a period as any that the world has known: within a short three hundred years we find Copernicus and Galileo asserting that the earth does move; Harvey discovering the circulation of the blood; Gutenberg and Caxton inaugurating printing; Cimabue and Giotto giving birth to the primitive school; Dante and Petrarch, for the first time since antiquity, writing immortal verse. We find even a rise in education, a man such as Vittorino da Feltre creating a Utopian College at Mantua, teaching the classics and philosophy to girls as well as boys. The state of the age is parti-coloured: it shines with learning, it is black with vice. Intellect is separate from morals; hardly a name, however great, is clean: the immortal goldsmith, Cellini, is a ruffian and a

thief ; the poet Villon is a thief, a murderer, and a drunkard ; the great Machiavelli is the prince of liars. Woman moves in this chaos, sometimes free, sometimes bound. Perhaps the conception laid down by Rabelais of the Abbey of Thelema, its motto, " Do what you will," expresses the complete cynicism of the romantic Renaissance. It is natural enough that in an atmosphere such as this, woman, who is subtle, should adapt herself easily to new conditions, should find a new liberty. She did not progress in power, but she progressed in happiness. Little by little it became bad form to strike women, to be rude to them publicly ; they might be tortured privately, even sawn in two alive between two planks, but before the world they must be treated with bow and compliment. So one may sum up this part of the subject by repeating that woman rose in happiness, if not in worth, and that here was a progress.

IV.—Hesitations

The reader will realize that in a period such as this, where modernity was clashing with antiquity, where rulers rose and swiftly fell,

where one day refinement and learning bloomed, while another day, in the same city, prevailed the rule of a nobleman with the sensibilities of an executioner, the position of woman, whether married or single, must have varied a great deal.

One of the handicaps which woman had not yet overcome was the tendency of the late Middle Ages to create close corporations. Feudalism was exceedingly close, in this sense, that a woman of plebeian blood did not, as a rule, legally marry a nobleman. As time went on, as during the Renaissance, in Venice, in Florence, Genoa, Hamburg, London, etc., rich merchants arose, noblemen began to marry the daughters of the wealthy man. The impulse which to-day leads the French duke and the English peer to take a mercantile heiress as a wife from the United States existed during the Renaissance also. It was desirable for a woman to marry a nobleman, because this was the best road to dignified treatment; a hundred years later, and especially two hundred years later, a woman could be happy in her own class, the bourgeoisie, but during the Renaissance she would be happier with a nobleman.

Unfortunately, there were still two laws—one

for women and one for men. Whereas a nobleman could marry whom he chose and retain his social position, a girl of noble family, or even a woman of mediocre family, who married below her class suffered severely. For instance, in Germany, as late as the thirteenth century, a woman who married a serf lost her liberty. She found equal difficulties in trade. Woman earned her own living more easily in the year 1200 than in the year 1750 ; it was mainly during the Renaissance, a period during which she was absurdly idealized, that woman found herself debarred from paying occupations, that the seed was planted of the great economic rebellion of woman, the end of which we have not yet seen. At Salerno there were women doctors in the eleventh century ; some of the guilds admitted women, but by degrees, as the towns came to fear that there would be too many masters in the guilds, and too few buyers, admissions were restricted : naturally women were the first to be excluded.

It should be said in justification of man during the Renaissance that woman seemed to accept the low position in which she found herself. Her subordination was still complete ; it extended so far that Thomas Aquinas stated

that children should love their father more than they did their mother. And woman was content. A typical case is that of the prioress of Whistones, in 1301. A prioress was a person of importance; not only was she the head of a nunnery, but she might control a large estate, have temporal power, and dispose of troops. When in the district of Whistones a meeting of prelates was held, the prioress was naturally invited. But she replied that it was not fitting for a woman to attend a meeting of men. She did not hesitate to command gardeners, but she did not think herself fit to contradict bishops. The only type of woman who asserted herself much was the heiress; if she had personality, it was not always easy to coerce her into marriage. Joan of Acre, for instance, defied Edward I. and married the man of her choice. Such cases are not common, but they show that a woman of position might perhaps take charge of her future.

Marriage during the Renaissance was in a very confused state. Theoretically, marriage within a family could not take place; for instance, the Lateran Council, in 1215, forbade the marriage of third cousins. But this did not prevent the granting of dispensations to marry third cousins,

second and first cousins, nieces and aunts. No woman knew where she stood with the marriage law, because money and influence could always cause it to be twisted. But one important idea, from woman's point of view, developed during the Middle Ages, and grew stronger during the Reformation: it was the idea of the wedding dowry. Until the sixth century, in every part of the world, the price of a marriageable girl had been paid to her father; the Barbarians, who in this sense were not so barbarous, began to develop the idea that the girl's price was not the price of a heifer, but money which belonged to her. The Barbarians felt that a girl, on marrying, lost the family from which she came, and entered a new family where she would be defenceless. So her *price* was converted into her *marriage portion*. Thus, if she separated from her husband or became a widow, she ceased to be a wretched dependent upon her own children. In a great many cases the portion was stolen from the woman and dissipated by her husband, but the tendency was there; that alone interests a study such as the present.

It should be said that in this period woman completely lost the support of the Church. The Church was in a state of decay, and it needed the

strong wind of the Reformation to give it back its vigour. The priesthood was immoral, practically as a matter of course; Gregory VII. (1073-1085) had, it is true, made desperate efforts to cleanse the life of the Church by imposing celibacy, but resistance was intense; though celibacy by degrees came to be accepted, popular feeling was against it. In the *Roman de la Rose* we find Jean de Meung, in 1230, arguing against the celibacy of the clergy; public opinion supported him. It was dimly felt that celibacy was no remedy; many who persecuted the Protestants, a little later, agreed with them in their hearts. This because of the scandal of the monasteries. These, with the abbeys, had once represented civil power emerging from the tide of war. Now the Kings were strong; having no work to do, the monasteries intrigued, and often lived in vice. Pope Innocent VIII., in 1489, horrified by the situation, caused an inquiry to be made, and found that women of bad repute had been appointed prioresses of religious establishments, that the jewels and lands of the abbeys had been stolen; St. Albans was the worst plague spot; it is a criticism upon manners during the Renaissance that for crimes such as these the abbot was not deposed, but

merely admonished. St. Albans was not an unusual case; a record entitled the *Compendium Compertorum* gives a similar catalogue all over the country; the hour had come for Henry VIII. and a dissolution of societies which had ceased to champion the poor and the women—women being of the poorest and the weakest.

V.—*Culture and Emotion*

Most of the great centres of learning that exist to-day, and some which have decayed, arose in the very early days of the Renaissance. Schools and universities formed, one might say, by accident. It is a mistake to think that the Universities of Oxford, Cambridge, Bologna, Paris, Heidelberg, etc., were created as universities are created to-day by a grant from the State, or a rich man. The universities generally sprang up round a monastery, or even round an individual monk who happened to be a learned man. The case of Oxford is probably one of those. Some learned monk made a reputation as a teacher, as a fine Latin and Greek

scholar, or a master of logic. Pupils came to him, collected round him as they did in Greece round Socrates and Plato. Their number grew; some became teachers in their turn; they had to be housed somewhere, so inns began to be built; rich men, or clerics, persons of enlightenment, helped with money to build the colleges; these were intended as boarding-houses for the students. They grew, became established and well known; little by little a university arose. The fact that so many colleges were built during great periods of architecture, the Gothic and the Romanesque, should not delude us. They merely happened to be beautiful: what the writer wishes to illustrate is that during the Renaissance education was an accident, and that woman benefited by it only in virtue of a chapter of accidents.

On the whole, woman drew nothing whatever from education by the monks. The subordination of woman appears when we discover that while there was learning in the monasteries, there was hardly any in the nunneries. The monk, particularly the Benedictine, was often a laborious scholar, copying out the Scriptures for distribution, and sometimes increasing his knowledge of Latin and Greek literature, so that he

might train young friars. This did not happen in the nunneries, where women were taught to obey the rule, to pray, contemplate, assist the sick and the poor. If literature and philosophy were kept alive at all, it is to the men in the Church that the credit is due. The clerics did not only train novices, but occasionally went to the castles when enlightened noblemen wished to have their sons educated. On the whole, the regular clergy performed the work of culture inside the monastery, while a few of the secular clergy went outside.

What that education was we do not know very well, because the words used in the Middle Ages to-day have different meanings. One may assume, however, that a young man would be taught something of his own language, to read Latin and Greek literature, a little logic, elementary arithmetic, elementary mathematics, and music. Later on, he began to play with what was called astronomy, but was actually astrology, namely, the forecasting of the future by the stars. The reader will realize from the pursuit of anything so burlesque as astrology, how feeble this education must have been.

Meanwhile, the education of chivalry was doing for women what the monks could not do.

Inside the castle, the girl was not at such a disadvantage; the chivalric teacher was allowed contacts with the girl that were not allowed to the monk. Thus, the girl of noble family shared to a great extent in the education of her brothers. It must be said that here was an education much inferior to that of the monks, for it consisted mainly in the use of arms, riding, various sports, and indoor games. But the castle added something that the monastery had not thought of: table manners and the practice of courtesy. The girls joined in all this, except in the use of arms; in addition, they were taught to manage a household, and to nurse the sick; in a few cases they might learn a modern language, read a little literature, or a little history. But the greatest stress of all was on good manners; just as in Boccaccio we have seen that the Renaissance thought it more important to appear than to be, so were women taught that their speech must be honeyed, even if poisoned.

The women of the Renaissance being educated and having been raised to a certain height of respect by the troubadours, we find that more men deferred to them, and loved them, than in the earlier periods. Just as the troubadour had set up woman as a sort of æsthetic ideal, just as

he had invented romance, so did the latter part of the Renaissance underline another feature of the relationship between man and woman—emotion. All through history, man has loved woman, but he has not always sacrificed himself for her sake. It is true that Leander every night swam the Dardanelles to reach his beloved Hero, but the average Greek, when in peril at sea, would probably have uttered the cry: “Women and children last!” Now we come to a gentler dispensation; woman has become more precious, the fact of her womanhood giving her a sort of privilege. A typical case of this we may take from the story of Urquhart Castle, in 1295. The stronghold was besieged by the English King, Edward I., during his attempt to subdue Scotland. The garrison was hard-pressed, starving, its defences breached; it was practically certain that the castle must soon fall. Thereupon, the Scottish governor, anxious to save the life of his wife, caused her to be clad in rags and driven from the gates. When she encountered the English, she told them that she was a beggar woman who had by accident been shut up within the castle; she also said that the garrison had driven her forth because food was running short. The English believed her story

and let her go; presently, when the lady was safe, the Scottish garrison sallied out and was cut down to the last man.

This spirit, this emotional approach to womanhood, increases throughout the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries; it becomes strongest of all during the English Renaissance, round about 1550. This we know by the poetry that has been left to us by that period; it varies from country to country, according to the national temperament. Addressing his lady, the Italian tended to be rhetorical, the Frenchman simple and graceful, the Englishman emotional, indeed, passionate. Among the English lyrical poetry (which the writer selects as typical so as to avoid unsatisfactory translations) we find lines that survive, that remain jewels in the treasury of English poetry. They define very well the romantic attitude to woman which the Renaissance had fostered. For instance, these lines of Sir Thomas Wyatt (1503-1542):

“ O goodly hand !
Wherein doth stand
My heart distract in pain ;
Dear hand, alas !
In little space
My life thou dost restrain.”

Again, Henry Constable (1555-1615): ,

“ Diaphenia like the spreading roses,
That in thy sweets all sweets incloses,
Fair sweet how I do love thee !
I do love thee as each flower
Loves the sun’s life-giving power.
For dead, thy breath to life might move me.”

Perhaps the essential spirit of the Renaissance, of the rebirth of the race, of exultant youth and radiance, is found in Shakespeare’s *Youth and Age* :

“ Age, I do abhor thee ; youth, I do adore thee ;
O ! my love, my love is young.
Age, I do defy thee : O ! sweet shepherd, hie thee,
For methinks thou stayest too long.”

But the sweetest and purest expression of this more emotional feeling is to be found in a poem of Herrick (1591-1674), entitled “ To Anthea, Who May Command Him Anything.” The poem is so exquisite that it may be quoted in full :

“ Bid me to live, and I will live
Thy Protestant to be ;
Or bid me love, and I will give
A loving heart to thee.
A heart as soft, a heart as kind,
A heart as sound and free
As in the whole world thou canst find,
That heart I’ll give to thee.

Bid that heart stay, and it will stay
To honour thy decree :
Or bid it languish quite away,
And't shall do so for thee.

Bid me to weep, and I will weep
While I have eyes to see :
And, having none, yet will I keep
A heart to weep for thee.

Bid me despair, and I'll despair
Under that cypress-tree :
Or bid me die, and I will dare
E'en death to die for thee.

Thou are my life, my love, my heart,
The very eyes of me :
And hast command of every part
To live and die for thee."

VI.—*Jewelled Minds*

We know only in general what woman became during the Renaissance, but we know in particular to what heights rose some women, touched by education and inflamed by the romance of the period. Thus, Christine de Pisan (1363-1431), a strange female genius, together a poetess, historian, and writer of political works ; Cecilia Gonzaga, a Greek scholar at the age of ten, at the same time capable of

practising field sports like a boy; Lucrezia Tornabuoni, poetess, mystic, patron of Botticelli, the worthy mother of Lorenzo the Magnificent; Vittoria Colonna, beloved of Michael Angelo, an authority on Plato, and the head of an intellectual debating club; Amelia Pia, poetess; Veronica Gambara, head of yet another debating salon; Isabella d'Este, the patroness of painters; the amazing Olympia Morata, who, at the age of sixteen, was lecturing on philosophy at Ferrara, who wrote criticism, and translated the Bible. The most remarkable of all, perhaps, is Marietta Strozzi: she defied her family and lived alone. By the side of an act so daring, poetry, criticism, are poor things.

We should not, however, conclude too hastily on the intellectual quality of these women, notable though they were; it should be observed that Isabella d'Este and Lucrezia Borgia competed as collectors of works of art, and that many so-called intellectual groups actually met to tell improper stories; notable was a circle which formed round the lewd writer Aretino. The only importance of these circles is that at last men and women were mixing for conversation instead of coming together only in the lists of love. Miss Edith Sichel eloquently sums up the

women of the Renaissance in the following words :—

The Renaissance made an epoch for women; it gave them a new field and a new importance. Its appeal to beauty, its quick social developments, the emotional energies, and the varied activities that it involved, were peculiarly suited to their powers; and their frequent discussions in loggia or lemon grove about love and friendship, with all their analysis and nice distinctions between the “love for collective humanity, for irrational objects, for the Great-All . . . for the Angels,” though they were little more than metaphysical babble, were yet so finely adapted to feminine intuition that they brought women into society, not as queens of chivalry, but as companions. Nor were women, with their need for expression, slow to make intercourse into an art. They did for life what painting, sculpture, poetry had effected for beauty and ideas; they were its interpreters. They stand, as it were, a race apart, independent of their several nationalities, with the same defects and qualities, the same outlook, recognizing their family likeness and holding correspondence with each other throughout Europe. Alike they were full of exuberant energy and curiosity; alike they showed a kind of naïve maturity, a paradoxical blending of art and instinct. Large, sunny, graceful, with a golden opinion of themselves and of others, to them everything seemed worth while.

They danced, they sang, they commanded troops, they read Virgil and Cicero and Greek philosophy, they brought up large families, they wrote treatises, they planned dresses, they governed provinces. They were brilliantly efficient: they went far, but they did not go deep.

VII.—The Reformation

The Reformation has nothing evident in common with the Renaissance; in fact, when the Reformation arises the Renaissance is finished. But the course of human ideas is not subject to violent upheavals; there are actions and reactions, while a certain idea travels forward, steadily all through. The Reformation was hostile to the cynicism and the graces of the Renaissance, but, the Renaissance having favoured learning and debate, books having been produced in rather larger numbers, the critical spirit sprang up. As the Church decayed, as education and criticism operated, a certain freedom of mind arose and the Reformation became possible.

The Reformation was not hostile to woman; the Protestants were comparatively willing to acknowledge the human equality of woman; the general outlook of the first Protestants was democratic, just as that of the early Christians had been democratic. As the Church hardened and allied itself with the kings and nobles, Protestantism arose to demand cleaner marriage

and a purer clergy. If a bitter Puritanism had not come with the Reformation the movement would have done less harm : it is interesting to observe, by the way, that the early Christians were just as puritanic as the early Protestants : Puritanism is the first sign of the desire to reform.

When the Reformation came the guilds had practically broken down ; woman found it difficult to earn her own living, except in the home, where she spun, wove, cooked, made beer, soap, candles, etc. However, woman needed protection ; things could be done to her in the home that could not be done publicly ; she suffered many obscure tyrannies. Luther and his followers afforded protection to woman by objecting to her being pressed into marriage, though they thought essential the consent of parents. Curiously enough, the early Protestants had no fundamental objection to polygamy ; reverting to tradition, they were prepared to condone it, and it is interesting to note that in Germany, in 1648, after a great many men had been killed during the Thirty Years' War, polygamy was legalized for a certain period. The liberalism of Luther and the Reformers appeared in their acceptance of

divorce. In Germany and Sweden, notably, divorce was recognized by the Protestant Church, even though woman did not yet have rights equal to those of man. In England there was even a period when divorce was allowed to both parties, and when re-marriage was made possible. This is important as an indication of tendency; much time still had to elapse—in fact, another two hundred years—before divorce for both sides became easy and cheap, but the seeds were there. It does not matter whether divorce was rare or common; what matters is that it might be tolerated; that the mind of man at length absorbed the idea that marriage need not be permanent. For the story of woman is the story of marriage; marriage is her protection, and marriage may be her chain; we have seen in the foregoing chapters how marriage came to defend her and to give her rights; we shall see further on how she established those rights, civil, economic, and political; here we need only note the dawn of the idea that woman obtains her rights by marriage, and that she need not in exchange tolerate a lifelong union that may be wretched.

CHAPTER VI

THE AGE OF CRITICISM

I.—The Seventeenth Century

SOCIETY changed swiftly in the seventeenth and especially in the eighteenth century. Protestantism, with its taste for discussion, with its refusal to assume the sacred character of the priest, was to modify accepted ideas, and to give rise unconsciously to the agnostic movement. Thus, once again, in the history of mankind and in the history of woman, it is Christianity which conducts the human orchestra. Naturally the Protestants did not know what they were doing; most worldly actions are of such a character. But when a number of important people threw off Roman Catholicism and began to examine their own consciences, they were bound to discover doubts. Some became cynical, for human beings are of two temperaments: some are born religious, while others are born doubters. In the seventeenth century the religious either remained Roman Catholics or provided the

Huguenots; the doubters began to sow the seed from which was to spring Voltaire.

The education of woman, in the seventeenth century, was essentially a polite education; the religious side was stressed only in so far as to enforce conformity upon women of position. In that sense, the women of the seventeenth century were akin to the women of the Renaissance, but they were beginning to think intellectually: until then they had thought only morally or æsthetically. They were not, in the modern sense, educated women; two hundred years would elapse before a European or American woman could hope to obtain real education. If she was a woman of talent, she must steal knowledge. One should not generalize from the women whose names we know: Mme. de Sévigné was a charming woman with a gift for letter-writing; her works are classics, but she merely happened. She was not bred, as young women are to-day bred, out of colleges. The same applies to women like Mlle. de Scudéry, or Mme. de Maintenon. All over Europe, the seventeenth century was a period of great brilliancy; at the court of the Stuarts, at that of the kings of Spain, or France, feasts, private theatricals, ballets, and comedies

flourished; the business of the nobility was still fighting, but more and more the novel, the theatre, and poetry began to occupy them. Hence came affectation. Our modern eyes can hardly visualize the rich woman of the seventeenth century, her movements impeded by a great ruff, walking with difficulty in her swollen garments of velvet or brocade; her fingers decorated with as many as fifteen or twenty rings drawn over her gloves, her face thick with cosmetics, her hair dressed upon a wire frame. . . . The poor woman was still a beast of burden; she was still subject to overwork and to unspeakable cruelty; but the rich woman, the one who until recently has marked the course of history, was still a woman of the Renaissance; the troubadour outlook survived; while, in theory, a woman of position was pure and modest, the moral level of the seventeenth century was no higher than it had been before.

All the same, some women were thinking. One of the most notable was Mlle. de Scudéry. She was ugly, "swart and gipsy," and wrote romances, though of a sarcastic temperament. One can hardly believe that she intends the following sentence: "I say this as if you could see into my heart: you cannot hurt my feelings

more than by treating me as a clever woman.” Yet, Mlle. de Scudéry was already railing at her period. Hear her: “Is there anything odder than the way in which people deal with the education of women? One does not wish them to be coquettish or loose, and yet one allows them carefully to learn all that is fittest to looseness, without allowing them to know anything that can fortify their virtue or occupy their mind.” Further, she says: “To this person, who must show good sense until her death and talk until her last breath, one teaches nothing which might make her speak more agreeably or act with more conduct.”

Mlle. de Scudéry refers to great difficulty in her way, because the seventeenth century scoffs at feminine pretensions. It is true that Fénelon, the great archbishop, believes in the teaching of science to woman, but on the whole the century scoffs. Even women scoff at each other; even Mme. de Maintenon. This lady was one of the most remarkable personalities of her century. She seemed ill-fitted by nature for the *rôle* which she played. Long-nosed, shapeless about the mouth, her skull round as a canon-ball, she imposed herself upon Louis XIV. In the monarch's esteem she followed courtesans, Mme.

de Montespan, Mlle. de la Vallière, Mlle. de Fontanges; she became the governess of his illegitimate children . . . and after many years his wife. She had personality, yet judgments vary. For instance, Sir James Stephen calls her the very type of mediocrity out of place. He states that "her prudery and her religiousness, such as it was, served but to deepen the aversion which her intriguing, selfish, narrow-minded, and bigoted spirit excites and justifies." And this is the woman who created one of the first colleges for women, St. Cyr! Mme. de Maintenon was a champion of women; she wanted to raise their mental grade. She believed in the teaching of poetry, in learning to speak properly, in frequenting the theatre, etc. Her prudishness, however, was intense, and by degrees, as religiousness grew stronger, she tried to turn girls from reading and science towards humility, simplicity, Christian obedience. By stressing piety, she began to efface her own work. In one place she sums up women brutally: "Women know things only by halves, and the little they know as a rule makes them proud, disdainful, gossiping, and disgusted with solid matters." Mme. de Maintenon was not a great educator, but she was a pioneer.

Pioneers do things imperfectly, but they are the first to attempt them.

These early movements were influenced by Protestantism. The Protestants were more serious than the Roman Catholics, because they were new, because they were a minority. They attracted people of an intellectual cast of mind; even Catholics were influenced, as in the story of Port Royal, in which Mme. de Maintenon was interested. Port Royal was a convent, reserved, it is true, for Catholics, but influenced by what is called Jansenism, namely by the importance of moral ideas. Passionately devout, these women stressed practical humility, practical charity, practical virtue. Moral ideas thus spread among women. In the middle of the æsthetic Renaissance, the moral point of view originated, but it was only in the seventeenth century that the relationship between man and woman took the shape of a moral bond. Another step in the evolution of woman is taken. Though the seventeenth century is frivolous, solid thought, responsibility, is growing in women.

But the movement is slow: if Mme. de Maintenon herself scoffs at woman . . . what could be expected of man! The reader must

make a mental picture of this queer period of salons. Salons existed only in the houses of rich women who received their friends on a fixed day every week. People met to talk, and ladies gave their opinion on anything. Young aristocrats, learned men, unbelieving priests, made up a brilliant gathering. The talk was of love, politics, gambling, poetry. Improper stories threaded the conversation. Sentiment haloed it. Someone talked theology. Especially just then women began to talk science; in the middle of the salon you might find a terrestrial globe, Central Africa blank, America blank beyond New York: the lady of the house was a geographer. Out of a window peered a telescope: the lady was an astronomer. Or a doctor that knows of no remedies except bleeding and cupping. She was ridiculous. She wallowed in words she did not understand, and naturally man laughed at her. Molière was particularly bitter. Listen to his heavy husband talking to blue-stockings:

“For your perpetual books I care not at all.

Apart from your fat Plutarch, fitted to press my ties,
You should forthwith burn up this stuff devoid of
merit,

And leave the quest of science to doctors of the town.”

Further on, and this is interesting, Molière attacks the new woman, the woman of 1672 :

“ Our fathers on this point were people of much sense.
 They said that a woman has the learning she needs
 When the capacity of her mind knows how to raise
 itself
 The difference to perceive between a coat and
 breeches.”

This is amusing, because Juvenal, nearly two thousand years ago, was attacking the new woman ; she is attacked in 1672, just as she is to-day. Woman is always new and always criticized. If she is criticized to-day, how hard must have been the path of people like Mme. de Maintenon ! The following incident suggests the period. During the siege of Pamplona, by the French, a Spanish Infanta swore that she would not change her linen until the city was relieved. The siege lasted eleven months ; from the colour of the royal lady's linen a fashionable colour arose, called *couleur Isabelle*. The Infanta's name was Isabelle, and the colour was buff. Upon such a century pioneer women were trying to make an impression.

Meanwhile, in England, women led a rather more masculine life. The fuss and artificiality of France and Italy existed in England, too, but

the sporting tradition was naturally stronger among the English. For instance, in 1642, Dame Mary Bankes defended Corfe Castle against the Parliamentary troops. She closed the gates, collected soldiers and supplies. In person, she received the messengers demanding the surrender of the castle, and had artillery trained upon them. Likewise, Charlotte, Countess of Derby for two years defended Latham House against the Parliamentary troops; she was her own commander-in-chief, and defeated the Parliamentarians every time. This is all the more extraordinary in that women were then frequently married at thirteen, or even at twelve; it would be thought that in such circumstances personality would not easily develop. Possibly the sight of the world as it was then, with Central Europe ravaged by war for thirty years, when the rivers were thick with corpses, so that pestilence after pestilence came over the country, had upon women a stimulating effect. On the other hand, dark superstition prevailed. Women of position used love potions, which they poured into their victims' wine; hundreds of trifles were unlucky; if a cow sickened in a village where lived an old woman, rumour cried out that she was a witch.

The witch was burnt alive, or thrown into a pond to see whether she floated or sank. If she sank she was no witch, for water received her. Contrast inspires this century : it is another period of beginnings.

But again, as in France, we find Protestantism at work in England, just as it is at work in New England. Among the bourgeois who supported Cromwell, among the people who landed at Plymouth Rock, who created Boston, we find a harder type ; we find the women who will make the eighteenth century and modern times. Mr. Sidney Dark wrote an interesting essay on Lucy Hutchinson, a typical Puritan. She lived for knowledge, in the fear of God, purely, dutifully, if perhaps a little unsympathetically. She had tutors in music, dancing, etc., but says : “ My genius was quite averse from all but my book . . . I would never practise my lute or harpsichords but when my masters were with me.” Mr. Dark says of her that when unlucky girls and boys were brought to her father’s house, she tired them with more grave instructions than their mothers. She herself bluntly remarks : “ Play among other children I despised.” And yet, and yet—here again this strange, blended seventeenth century : “ I used to exhort my mother’s

maids much, and to turn their idle discourses to good subjects; but I thought when I had done this on the Lord's Day, and every day performed my due tasks of reading and praying, that then I was free to do anything that was not sin; for I was not at that time convinced of the vanity of conversation which was not scandalously wicked. I thought it no sin to learn or hear witty songs and amorous sonnets or poems."

How is one here to find one's way? Lucy Hutchinson, in later years, did realize the evil character of amorous sonnets, but even though she was a Puritan, there ran through her the conflicting strains of the seventeenth century, when woman was still light, when she together considered her salvation and critically viewed her mind. The eighteenth century was more clearly to define the future, to afford a first proof of the modern woman.

II.—Mankind is Born Good

One of the most revolutionary ideas of the eighteenth century is expressed by this phrase of Jean-Jacques Rousseau. Here was a complete reaction from the idea that mankind is born

laden with original sin. Rousseau suggested instead that man had been made evil by his conditions, and that he was originally good. This idea, as it filtered into points of view, began to upset the common theories: it had much to do with the American Revolution, and with the French Revolution; it influenced the enfranchisement of the people, the treatment of crime, the revolt of women, and the origins of socialism. It was an idea which made people laugh, but which moved them all the same.

The intellectual contribution of the eighteenth century eddies round this idea of Rousseau: the reader will realize how much it must have affected the position of women. As soon as one assumes that mankind is born good and is made evil by bad treatment, one must conclude that if women are light and foolish it is because they are ill-trained. In a sense, it is unfortunate that this idea came to Rousseau, because he was a person of loose life, fantastic appearance, and endowed with a character which failed morally, not only as regards women, but as regards the common prides which we call honour. Rousseau was the typical vagabond upon whose brow a star chooses to settle. Still, we cannot command inspiration, and though it would have been

better if the idea had come to Voltaire, in fact it did not. Rousseau was, practically speaking, an anarchist. One likes to hear him reason : " I too have been good. For forty years I have been easily and charmingly good." (He was mistaken.) " My movements of hatred and malice, since when do I find them in myself? Since I have entered into human society. What I am, I have been made into by them. Mankind is born good, I am sure of it; man has become evil in becoming sociable. Moral evil is the result of error. Mankind thinks itself made to live sociably. It should have stayed in a state of nature." Rousseau goes so far in his hatred of organized society that he looks upon the man who thinks as a depraved animal. The present writer, being inclined to describe man as a degenerate ape, will not quarrel with Rousseau, except that he is doubtful where Rousseau is positive. Moreover, Rousseau, like most inspired people, pushes his ideas to the extreme; he thinks that human systems arise from the stupid selfishness of the crowd, and the manœuvres of the knaves; he assumes that man is born free and is everywhere in chains. All this is wild, for nothing proves that man is born free. Rousseau becomes crankish when he

opposes the theatre, which he calls a school of bad morals. This is absurd: M. Faguet broke through that childish idea by pointing out that if man is born good, and if man composes comedies, then how can the comedies do harm? Likewise, Rousseau hates education. He vaguely believes that the child can teach itself, that we can take our information from the air; he seeks to look upon the arts and letters as occasions for sin. The characters he creates are full of virtue, thoroughly immoral, full of rhetoric. What comes out of this chaos? An important thing: philanthropy. Until then, there had been charity. The reader will appreciate the difference. Many people had assisted man; Rousseau conceived the idea of loving him.

When we come to other pioneers, such as Montesquieu, we strike a different, more aristocratic, more frivolous attitude. He is a sceptic; his work connects with that of Voltaire. He is what they call an experimental philosopher; science, which is dawning, suggests itself to him as important; he has ideas of social organization. Instead of allowing a country to happen, he would like to arrange the population *pro rata* to acreage, keeping the proportion true for bachelors and families. But he, too, has con-

fidence in humanity; he is a democrat. He connects with Rousseau, but he is a little drier.

Still drier is another of the great group, namely Voltaire. Voltaire is the real eighteenth century, the great revolutionary. Where Montesquieu constructs, rather childishly, and where Rousseau rhapsodizes, we find Voltaire ironic and mercilessly logical, smashing the old social ideas. He is continually in conflict with the authorities. At the age of twenty-three he goes to the Bastille for a satire on the Regent. Six years later, one of his plays is suppressed by the censor. As he grows older he remains untamed: twenty years later, his play *Mahomet*, on the excesses of fanaticism, is suppressed by the government as "infamous, wicked, irreligious, and blasphemous." Before then he has had to flee from Paris, and his books have been burnt by the common hangman. His *Philosophic Dictionary* is burnt in Paris and at Rome. But all this seems to harden his faith, to unite him with the glorious group of the Encyclopedia, with his colleagues Diderot and D'Alembert. His influence radiates in England and America; it touches tyrants, such as Frederick the Great of Prussia, and the Russian Czarina Catherine.

He is the champion of freedom, toleration, and justice.

Voltaire's is a double greatness: he broke down old ideas, and set up new ones. He protested against the censorship of books and plays; he engaged in a number of law cases for the defence of Protestants against the Catholic government; he was blazing the trail which Zola would follow a century later in the Dreyfus case. His life was a long struggle against the Roman Catholic Church; though he was not an atheist, but a free-thinker, he considered that priests caused wars and maintained tyranny. He had no faith in distinctions between vice and virtue, for these vary with period and according to latitude. There was a foolish side to Voltaire; he took a crankish interest in medicine, and believed with the eighteenth century that small-pox should be treated by bleeding, emetics, and strong wine. In his correspondence, one finds much nonsense of this kind. But mainly the man is noble. He thinks that the idea of justice should naturally grow in a good man; he considers that the idea of reward is as ignoble as the idea of punishment, namely, that it is enough for a man to do his duty.

These three men are the founders of

the eighteenth century, the restless, sceptical eighteenth century, a curious forerunner of the dull, heavy, respectable nineteenth century. The Victorian age springs from another eighteenth century, from a reaction against the courtesans, the dances, the corruption; from the Puritans.

No conception of the period can be had if we ignore the Puritans and their way of living, which to-day seems so strange. Roughly speaking, the American colonies founded their laws on the Old rather than on the New Testament. According to Mr. Arthur Train, the Reverend Mr. Davenport, of New Haven, stated that "the Scriptures do hold forth a perfect rule for the direction and government of all men." If New England had applied the Scriptures we might have had no blue laws. But, in fact, those early Americans laid down that it was sinful to keep Christmas or saints' days, to make mince pies, to dance, to play cards, to play any instrument of music except the drum, trumpet, or jews' harp; they considered that on Sundays it was wrong to cross the river, run, walk in one's garden, travel, cook food, make beds, sweep house, cut hair, shave, kiss one's wife, husband, or child. It is not surprising that people following such a code in the name of religious freedom

should feel entitled to scourge Quakers and kill Roman Catholics. The present writer quotes the laws of Connecticut and Massachusetts without derision, for he greatly admires these bitter pioneers. A small white community, separated from Europe by six week's sailing, and confronted with hordes of savages, must have a hard rule if it is to keep together. The Puritans lived bitterly, but on the whole cleanly, honourably, independently; it is they who made America, not the crowds of British, Italians, Germans, Swedes, and Poles who came behind. But the reader will realize the agonizing position of woman under Puritanism, for she was refused the elegance and gaiety natural to her temperament; no doubt the Puritan girl broke through, or schemed through, but on the whole she was oppressed. We must not forget this side of the picture, passing as we do from brilliant ideas and brilliant courts. Under Puritanism woman was given justice, but she was never given mercy. Thus we once more mark the passage of time, the beginning of even treatment for the two sexes; both are then equally harshly controlled.

Then again, contradiction. As in the seventeenth century, by the side of Puritanism, by the side of liberal ideas, we find an intense

brutality of life. Most English statesmen, in the eighteenth century, had no religion, and lived immorally; Prime Minister Walpole appeared drunk in drawing-rooms; Prime Minister Duke of Grafton took a loose woman to the theatre; there were no colleges for women, and only a few good schools for boys; Hannah More stated that in the parish of Cheddar there was only one Bible, which was used to prop a flower-pot. The cities were full of crime, and women were hanged for stealing more than five shillings; the gin shops of London advertised that they would make you drunk for a penny and dead drunk for twopence. The prisons and the transportation ships were full; both sexes were herded in cells; the prisons were centres of immorality. Meanwhile, day by day the people were losing their land, as it was stolen from them by the big landlords who fenced it. The reader need not be told how women were treated at that time. A woman of quality had much the same rights as two hundred years before, and was not generally forced into marriage; but she was often abducted for her fortune, and had no redress. A poor woman could be publicly whipped, or stood in the pillory. She had no rights against her husband, who was entitled to beat her. In a

number of cases a husband sold his wife to another man for five shillings; in Mr. Thomas Hardy's book, *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, you find an incident of this kind.

Thus continues the long tale of woman's misery; it seems that the ages will never unroll, that woman will never be free. She is infinitely higher than a thousand years before, and yet the next hundred years will make her position unrecognizable. The reader must realize that not only in medicine was the eighteenth century still barbarous. Not only did the barber remove teeth by means of a key in the shape of a corkscrew, but the middle eighteenth century had nothing that makes life so easy to-day; no steam, therefore no railways or steamboats; no glass windows, no means of ventilation, no sewers, no pure water; there was no telegraph, no telephone, no machine for making nails or pins; spinning and weaving, all this was done by hand. The housewife made her own beer and wine, her butter, and her bread. If she was well, she was overworked. If she was sick, people gave her beer during fever, performed operations without chloroform, and tied up the wound with a kitchen duster. As she grew older she lost most of her teeth; almost invariably she

had rheumatism. There were no bathrooms, which explains why the eighteenth century developed perfume to a high degree. Kings with a spittoon between their knees would give audience to ladies of the court.

All this had to be swept out by the industrial revolution, by the creation of steam, and therefore of factories. The independent workman had to go, and with him the power of the nobles, so that the middle class might arise, so that, little by little slavery might be lifted from the black, and somewhat removed from the white.

III.—Some Women

It is difficult to indicate what may be called types of the eighteenth century, because it was a period of beginnings as well as endings. But women of rank could aspire to influence as well as to pleasure. Pleasure naturally held a great place in the scheme, but for the first time women were personally hostesses; until the seventeenth century, they had mainly been exhibitions of their husbands' power. Now we find them not only entertaining, but intensely gambling. A great many took shares in the famous South Sea

Bubble, a speculation which burst in 1720, and led to the expulsion from Parliament of the Chancellor of the Exchequer himself. A Duchess of Devonshire is said to have lost £100,000 in speculation, while her sister, the Countess of Bessborough, was arrested and fined for gambling.

A characteristic specimen of the eighteenth century woman is Catherine of Russia. She was an extraordinary woman. Married to a drunkard, she enslaved her son until his death. She was sentimental and sensual, yet intellectual in the eighteenth-century way. That is to say, she dabbled with ideas, showed herself a patron of Voltaire, who flattered her with a grossness that makes one suspect irony, of Rousseau, and of D'Alembert. She brought Diderot to Lenin-grad; she read the *Philosophical Dictionary* from cover to cover. Yet she was at the mercy of any handsome adventurer; if he called her young and beautiful she made him a general or a governor. She was vastly ambitious, and enlarged the frontiers of Russia; she was a tyrant . . . and yet, as a democrat, she hated monarchist France. Her policy was muddled and continually changing; she explained this by saying that she was guided by "circumstances,

conjectures, and conjunctions.” She was a magnificent chaos. She had a certain dignity. For instance, when she heard that young Prince de Ligne had spied on some Mussulman women, who, thinking themselves alone, had unveiled their faces, she said to him in presence of the court: “Gentlemen, this pleasantry is in bad taste, and sets a very bad example. You are in the midst of a people conquered by my arms; and I propose that their laws, their religion, their morals, and their prejudices shall be respected.” This has nobility; here, a hundred years too early, is a hint of the attitude of Queen Victoria, who, hearing an improper story, remarked: “We are not amused.”

Another side of the eighteenth century is to be found in Martha Custis, who became the wife of George Washington. In his book on the hero, Professor James A. Harrison makes a charming picture of Martha Washington at twenty-six. She is beautiful, a highly-bred Virginian, “rich in heart and soul rather than the intellect and understanding.” She is a typical American lady of the eighteenth century, charming, high-spirited, not exactly a *grande dame*, but essentially a good housekeeper, an early riser, given to carrying her knitting about

the house. She is plainly dressed, attends to the kitchen and the laundry; she communicates, and every day devotes an hour to prayer and to the reading of the Scriptures. But Martha Washington was no Puritan; she was sociable, rather hot-tempered, fond of pretty clothes. She lived with George Washington the ideal life of the old plantations, but was always ready to follow him throughout the revolution; she joined him in winter quarters at Morristown, and was with him at Valley Forge. Martha Washington represents a beautiful type, intelligent but modest, devoted and full of gaiety. She is perhaps expressed by a phrase in Washington's letter to her, when he is appointed commander-in-chief: "I shall feel no pain from the toil or the danger of the campaign; my unhappiness will flow from the uneasiness I know you will feel from being left alone. I therefore beg that you will summon your whole fortitude, and pass your time as agreeably as possible."

What a sharp contrast is made with Martha Washington by the dazzling Madame de Pompadour! History treats her badly, looks upon her as a common courtesan. In fact, though born in the middle class, she had all the instincts of a

great lady. She was rather tall, slim, and very graceful. She had thick chestnut hair and dark eyebrows, the famous bow mouth, beautiful teeth and eyes. She conquered Louis XV. to such an extent that, in her middle years, she was to him friend rather than lover. She had captured his mind. This not only because she was vivacious and beautiful; she was well educated, played the spinet, rode as well as she sang, and was a perfect hostess. Madame de Pompadour is interesting, however, because she represents that important eighteenth-century type, the political woman. In conjunction with Prime Minister Choiseul, she made the treaty with Austria which Louis XV. signed. It was she exiled the Jesuits from France. She founded the porcelain factory at Sèvres, and induced the king to create the military school where France still trains her staff. Indeed, one gains an idea of Madame de Pompadour's personality from a description of her death. She read her will carefully over, charged her steward to recompense all who had tended her during her illness. and to give the money in her desk to the poor. She then ordered her women to dress her, and put some colour on her pale cheeks. She gave an audience to Janette, controller of the post-

office, read and criticized the papers he submitted to her, with her usual interest. The priest then spent some time with her. When he was about to take his leave, the marquise smiled and asked him to remain, saying: "One moment, *Monsieur le Curé*, we will take our departure together." A few moments later she died.

If the marquise differs from Martha Washington, how much more does Marie Antoinette differ from Madame de Pompadour! While the latter is insulted in history, Marie Antoinette is idealized and wept over because her stupid head was cut off, and an end made to a political strumpet. Marie Antoinette had auburn hair and heavy eyebrows. She was not beautiful, but attractive. She read very little, and what she read was vulgar. She loved pleasures, and changed them as often as she could. She had an intense passion for jewellery, which she liked to buy, and for which she forgot to pay. She encouraged the extravagance of the court, and gave the bad example of gambling. In public she behaved indiscreetly with men, and went out into Paris without escort. If she had not interfered in politics she might be dismissed as one of the many vulgar queens, but she could let nothing alone. Louis XVI. was stupid and

well-meaning. Marie Antoinette was stupid and domineering. Necessarily, she won. By her continual demands for money she upset the already disturbed exchequer. She insisted on the payment of a subsidy by France to Austria. She helped to throw France into the arms of the revolting American colonies, and thus maintained France's traditional enmity with England. She helped to turn out Turgot, who might have saved the finances and stopped the Revolution. When the French Revolution began, she took part in every mistaken act of policy, which she varied by a card party lasting thirty-six hours. First she was for fighting, then for flight. She loathed the mob, and did not understand why they asked for bread. In her time, women were flogged and branded with hot irons. With this she did not interfere. One might write an epitaph for Marie Antoinette, and say that she was as fitted to die well as she was ill-fitted to exist.

Meanwhile, in England the woman novelist had come, in the shape of the rather absurd Mrs. Aphra Behn and the more important Fanny Burney, to whom we owe *Evelina*. Fanny Burney paints a distasteful world: a young lady faints at the idea of seeing her father after a long

absence; her women are always weeping; their lives are always being blighted. Hers are womanly women, and so refined that Camilla thinks it an unpardonable liberty that a man should kiss her hand. Here is the beginning of sensibility: for many years after Miss Burney we shall have to suffer what Henry Tilney calls "imbecility in females, and a great enhancement of their personal charms." Indeed, the eighteenth century is sounder in France than it is in England, Russia, Italy, or Germany. In England the point of view is either mawkish or coarse. Fielding's great novel, *The History of Tom Jones*, continually affords sidelights on this. There is a certain looseness. The great Marlborough does not hesitate to receive money from the Duchess of Cleveland. The men assume that women marry them unwillingly, and Squire Western thinks marriage well founded on a little aversion; he does not threaten Sophia with a stick, but the threat is very near. The same points of view appear in the conversations of Dr. Johnson. When Boswell pleads for a lady who has been divorced from her husband, Johnson briefly replies: "My dear sir, never accustom your mind to mingle virtue and vice. The woman's a whore, and there's an end on't."

Which is rather elementary psychology. Mrs. Thrale remained friendly with Johnson only by flattering him in the grossest manner, but there was light in Johnson; he was slightly in favour of the education of women; he considered that only a weak man married for love, and went on to say that marriage was much more necessary to a man than to a woman. Dr. Johnson illumines the manners of his century, for he wonders why young women should marry, as they have so much more freedom, and so much more attention paid to them while unmarried than when married.

From a woman's point of view the eighteenth century was a period of decay and of creation. The decay is represented by the rococo style of printing, by editions where the title-page, headbands, and tail-pieces are incredibly complicated, the initials decorated, and the text made illegible by fleurons, vignettes, and borders. Art is corrupt, and manners are brutal. While the etchers are producing exquisiteness, women are wearing the brank. The brank is an iron frame fixed to the head; a plate, which enters the mouth, prevents the tongue from moving; sometimes the tongue is cut and bleeding. A woman who scolded or nagged could be sentenced

to wear the brank and to stand in the pillory. Let not the reader imagine that branks are oddities; a large number are to be found in museums. On December 3rd, 1741, Elizabeth Holborn was thus treated at Morpeth. As late as 1824 a scolding woman was fitted with a bridle at Congleton, Cheshire.

The reader will conclude as to the general situation of woman. In the eighteenth century, on the whole, in the French nobility, a girl was not consulted before marriage. This is a very deep-rooted French idea. Under the Code Napoléon the consent of parents was made essential, in the case of men up to the age of twenty-five, in the case of girls up to that of twenty-one. This was done away with only in 1907. In Germany, while marriage was no freer, both parties obtained divorce fairly easily, but in France, under the Code Napoléon, a man obtained divorce for infidelity, while woman had to prove additional grievances. Before that time, and throughout the eighteenth century, in France, no woman but a great lady could obtain anything except separation. As for England, where the old system of divorce by Act of Parliament continued to make divorce impossible for the poor, the figures exhibit the

situation. The modern divorce law was established in 1858. In the first three hundred years of divorce by Act of Parliament only 317 divorces were granted. But in the next eleven years as many as 1,279 were pronounced by the courts.

It is difficult to sum up this century of barbarism and enlightenment. It differs from the preceding because it is more intellectual, more intellectually cruel as well as intellectually just. Woman is more conscious of her situation: thus the next century will enable her to amend it.

CHAPTER VII

REBELLION AND RESPECTABILITY

I.—Early Rebels

THIS title gives the measure of the nineteenth century, which must not be confounded with the popular expression "Victorian Age." The fifty years extending between 1840 and 1890 were mainly mercantile, pietistic and reactionary; they afforded social justice grudgingly, and cannot impose their reputation upon Darwin and Swinburne. The great men of that day despised their period and its ideals; the period feared and disliked its gifted children. One may perhaps refer to the Victorian blight, but not to the Victorian Age. Moreover, we cannot call Victorian the movements which in other countries produced Abraham Lincoln, Flaubert, Garibaldi, and Wagner. So let us say Victorian Age when we mean everything that is hypocritical, dull, and meanly sensual; when we analyse the period which invented, which

philosophized, which fought for liberty, let us say, not "Victorian Age," but "nineteenth century."

The nineteenth century, like its predecessors, stood upon the shoulders of its fathers. It stood upon the great shoulders of Voltaire, on the lesser shoulders of Rousseau. These men laid the foundations; the nineteenth century erected the buildings. It was a time of ideas and of blood; South America and Europe underwent revolution. In that excited atmosphere, when kings were tumbled in the dust by the power of ideas, it was easy to be great. Only two women, Mary Wollstonecraft and Madame de Staël, achieved greatness, but many more suddenly rose out of their obscurity. In the early part of the French Revolution we find a crowd of women clamouring not only for liberty, but for feminine liberty. Women such as Olympe de Gouges, Théroigne de Méricourt, and Renée Audu, were among the first revolutionaries to demand woman's suffrage. Many became public speakers, and appeared at the clubs, even at the great constitutional republican club of the Cordeliers. Also, for the first time in Europe women's clubs formed, and one of these collected three hundred members. In fact, in 1792, during the famine at Lyons it

was the women's club that ruled the city and organized supplies. Naturally, the women who set out to do great things did small ones, because they were not only women, but also human beings. Frivolity and immorality ensued, as a result of which, in 1793, the clubs were closed by the Convention.

Meanwhile, however, the old-fashioned action of women was showing itself powerful. Women were forming political salons for the promotion of republican ideas; those of Mme. Roland and Mme. Robert were among the most celebrated; but the most powerful was perhaps that of Mme. de Condorcet, where the Lyceum Club was created. These women were remarkable in the field of character as well as that of the mind. For instance, Mme. Helvétius and Mme. Vernet had the courage to risk their heads to conceal Condorcet when he was proscribed. Thus they compare with Charlotte Corday, an absurdly idealized figure, who was merely a romantic heroine. Women of a more reflective type were marking their period, Mme. Roland, who at the age of eight was reading Plutarch, and especially Mme. de Staël. Mme. Roland was a born revolutionary; at the age of seven she had the audacity to wonder why the hostess should sit

in an armchair and the guest on a stool. By the time she was sixteen she was a radical and an agnostic; she became the chief adviser of her husband when he obtained cabinet rank; she was guillotined by the Jacobins. She is one of the many women who left us diaries, criticisms of the Revolution, and pamphlets. It is interesting to note that during the French Revolution several papers were edited and printed by women.

As for Mme. de Staël she was a handsome woman, with large, fiery black eyes, and black curls. She often attended at the Assembly; by temperament she was a Rousseauite, addicted to rather sentimental rhapsodies over the innocence of man. But at the same time she was a cool judge of the revolutionaries, of whom she has left us fine pen pictures. She had tact, too, and managed to make opponents meet in her drawing-room to talk. Still, she was not so substantial in the mind as was Mary Wollstonecraft. This woman, who was to marry Godwin, the revolutionary, whose daughter was to marry Shelley, another revolutionary, was remarkable because she originated the revolt of woman. Hers was a short life, for she died before reaching the age of forty, but it was entirely filled with study and with agitation in the cause of human

liberty. In her *Vindication of the Rights of Women* she showed herself an effective critic of masculine tyranny, because she was logical. She considered that equal education must result for women in equal civil and political rights. She objected to all distinctions brought about by rank and wealth. She campaigned against the "doll" side of woman, whom she viewed without illusion, merely striving to explain her, a little to excuse her: "Considering the length of time that women have been dependent, is it surprising that some of them hug their chains?" Such remarks are commonplace to-day; they were not so over a hundred years ago. She had a certain biting wit: "Formed to live with such an imperfect being as man, women ought to learn from the exercise of their faculties the necessity of forbearance." She objected to the education of a girl for her husband, as if for an eastern harem. She objected to the idea of woman as a man-hunter, and said that the idea of conquest made her sick. She asked why her sex should be trained to please men. In education she was a pioneer, for she objected to punishment by masters, and demanded trial of children by their own jury. And already she was in favour of co-education. It is not remark-

able that such a woman should have been called by Prime Minister Walpole "a hyena in petticoats." But then Walpole, gross-spoken, cynical, and narrow, was a poor judge of a first proof of the future.

Still, in spite of such women, change did not speed upon the world. In spite of the excitement of revolution we see, first, the United States refuse the suffrage to women; then the French National Assembly treat women so contemptuously that it refuses to read their petition. In other words, as regards woman the men of that period were lagging behind their ideas. Strictly speaking, the average man preferred a book by Mrs. John Sandford, entitled: *Woman in her Social and Domestic Character*, published in 1831. This book proclaimed that woman had a subordinate station, that her exertions should always be subordinate, guided and supported by man; it enjoined upon her the strictly feminine deportment of tears and faints: in three years England bought four editions. Therefore, though women had lit a beacon, it did not burn. Still, it smouldered. We find Maria Edgeworth writing a strong defence of female education. In this early nineteenth century we see Jane Austen deriding men even more than

women, sharpening upon them a continually witty pen. Here is no revolt, but in Jane Austen we hear the quiet giggle of the women who know man for a child, but as a child humour him. Indeed, there lives in this woman a secret rebellion against bourgeois snobbery. It will take a long time to overcome, but Jane Austen lives, and the bourgeoisie dies.

II.—Marriage

To analyse marriage in the nineteenth century is not so simple as to analyse ideas, because ideas are proclaimed, while marriage stays in emotional hiding. But one may say that sixty or seventy years ago a husband expected from his wife almost absolute obedience, and that he usually obtained it. She was not to interfere with him, but to comfort him if he failed, and to praise him if he succeeded. If he chose to be drunk publicly or to swear, or to be unfaithful she must tolerate it. It is only fair to add that, though a certain crudity of manners prevailed in those days, men were much less coarse, brutal, and faithless than they had been before. They tended to be respectable; we shall see a little

further on what respectability amounted to. The man of 1860 was a better man than the man of 1760, but he retained his old rights. Woman, on the whole, looked upon her rights as those of a subordinate; she recognized her sphere as being to cook, to look after children, and to please men. She found it difficult to earn an independent living, and thus she wanted protection. She did not greatly aspire to playing games or consorting with men. To read her Bible, tend her children, sing to her man, this seemed to make up her simple philosophy. Soon after her wedding she put on a cap and pretended no more to attentions. It sounds ideal; and it was—for men. Many a man in the twentieth century would like to turn back the clock to those simpler times, when women made few claims. But perhaps he might be bored by a companion who was almost invariably uneducated, sometimes practical, but never much of a friend. He might be wearied by her stress on social etiquette, and exasperated by the ease with which she was shocked.

Being a subordinate, woman was often subjected to rough treatment. For instance, we find Charles Lamb denying that there is such a thing as gallantry. He points out that round

about 1820 England is just giving up whipping women in public; that women are occasionally hanged; that actresses are hissed off the stage; that women stand in the pit of London theatres till they are sick and faint with exertion, while men sit; above all, he protests against the current sneers at female old age when it happens to be unmarried. This is important, for only very recently has the expression "old maid" begun to recede from our language. In the nineteenth century it was well established that a woman who did not succeed in "catching" a man was a failure.

If, however, she "caught" a man, she still lived under a hard rule. For instance, in France it was laid down that the wife must obey and follow her husband; if she hated him and ran away her person could be recovered by force. In England, in the early days of Queen Victoria, Mrs. Norton was sued by her husband for infidelity. The jury declared her innocent, and yet her husband retained the power to deprive her of her three infant children. Indeed, it was not until 1839 that a woman obtained the right of access to her children. Even then she could be deprived of them after they reached the age of seven. This because she was held to be

inferior. So strong was the feeling of inferiority of women that in 1840, when American women appeared in London at the Anti-Slavery Congress, the meeting declared that it was "contrary to the ordinances of the Almighty" that women should sit in congress. In spite of William Lloyd Garrison they were excluded. This had the excellent effect of provoking the first Woman's Rights Convention at Seneca Falls in 1848.

To revert to marriage in particular, until 1870 no English married woman had a right even to her earnings. If she worked and her husband was idle, he might receive her wages. This was done away with in 1870, but even then the husband still disposed of the property his wife brought into the marriage. It was not until 1882 that the Married Woman's Property Act mended this state of things. But to this day any English woman married before January 1st, 1883, still finds that any property of which separate use has not been given to her is still controlled by her husband. The theory was that a wife is a minor; her husband was responsible for her debts, and to this day he is responsible for her libels. As regards divorce, the strange old system in virtue of which an Act of Parliament

had to be obtained, continued in England up to 1857, namely, to the lifetime of millions of people living to-day. However, when this divorce law was made, inequality was created, for divorce was granted to men whose wives were unfaithful, while it was granted to women only if in addition the husband deserted his wife or proved cruel. Thus, all through the nineteenth century Englishwomen were refused divorce from unfaithful husbands, and not until 1878 could a woman obtain even a separation for cruelty or desertion. Both as regards property and as regards divorce woman was still in an inferior position. It was only by degrees that woman gained control of her property; women waited as late as 1891 for a British court to decide that a husband may not force his wife to live with him.

III.—Work

It will be seen from the above that though the struggle was intense, it was successful. As 1870, 1880, 1890 came, the fetters of women were gradually struck off. We have seen that it took several thousands of years to establish

marriage as a legal and exclusive arrangement. In the nineteenth century marriage is absolute; men are punished for bigamy; some sort of divorce is granted to women. That struggle is finished, and the moral contract between man and woman is becoming equitable. So now the struggle moves to another ground, to the demand for civil rights as they affect property, inheritance, family powers, etc. Current ideas allow of firm victories. This is partly due to the seething ideas of the nineteenth century, a century of much greatness; it is also due to the factory system and to the vast increase of women workers.

The eighteenth century was a period of great ladies, rich in social influence. In the nineteenth century the great lady has gone. She is driven out by steam, the factory, the middle class. In her stead rises first the woman who works in a cotton mill; then the forewoman, the manageress, the trader. Before the end of the nineteenth century the female inspector, the doctor, have arrived. There is no room for great ladies, because there is less room for futility, and because women are working. In Boston and in Cranford we still find Miss Matty trembling in the presence of a man. But the younger Miss

Matty is earning money. In 1880 a formidable type appears, the shorthand typist, the woman who seeks work first and marriage second. That one is seeking education as a means to freedom. Therefore, she pockets her salary and is audaciously beginning to say: "I earned it. It's mine."

In the nineteenth century women earned money at the price of much agony. When factories first were created the nineteenth century believed in liberty, that is to say, in the right of the strong to force the weak to do their will. A hundred years ago or so there were no regulations of any kind in European or American factories. The law left it to the employers and the workers to fight the matter out. It was only the conscience of the nineteenth century and the rising tide of ideas which forced inquiry upon the governments. It was then discovered that in the cotton mills of Lancashire children were employed for twelve to fourteen hours a day; that they were strapped to their benches so that they might not fall off; that only one set of beds was kept, since one shift of children went into them when the other came out. One mill-owner, before a commission of inquiry, protested with an air of injured innocence that he

employed no children aged less than five. In coal mines women were used in lieu of ponies to pull the trams. They did this ten hours a day or more, stripped to the waist, caked black with sweat and dust. Industrial diseases naturally raged; malformed bones, curved spines, rupture, asthma, and heart disease manifested themselves in girls of seventeen.

The nineteenth century woke slowly to the situation: in 1802 laws were passed for the ventilation and cleaning of cotton mills, but it was not until 1819 that a great victory was gained for children: their weekly labour was *limited to seventy-two hours*! Still, in 1845 women were excluded from night shifts; a few inspectors were moving among the worst wrongs. Nothing real was done until 1878, when children were excluded from the textile factories until they reached the age of ten. Meanwhile, women and children were being inspected by men; it was not until 1893 that the first woman was appointed inspector. The times were very dark. As we read to-day of a period so proximate, we must be surprised that some of the darkness has lifted so swiftly.

IV.—America

The American women, who have travelled so fast, began their journey to independence only in the nineteenth century. Yet a white population had inhabited America for two hundred years, during which women were treated much as they were in Europe. The agitations of the Renaissance and of the eighteenth century left American women almost untouched, because they were still pioneering. Life in America in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries held many elements of tragedy. The Indians provided continual danger; the population often moved, and therefore women had to rear their children and keep their homes in the face of incredible difficulties. Doctors were scarce, nurses unknown; schools were unsatisfactory; the small personal workshops provided few commodities. To obtain goods from Europe required four weeks or more; except in the cities, there was no police and no safety. It is not wonderful that American women did not early begin to dwell on their rights. It is remarkable, indeed, that they should have been sufficiently

conscious of their sexual dignity to send a petition to Congress in 1776, and demand the right to vote equally with men. This right was denied them, for the Americans of 1776 are separated by an abyss from the Americans of to-day. They were not Americans at all; they were colonial Europeans, imbued with European prejudices. They were closely akin to the British. The great immigration still had to come to form the American of to-day.

One can have no conception of that old America, unless one realizes that even in 1841 pigs were roving about New York, and eating the garbage that was thrown there, as do the dogs in Constantinople. This must have made a piquant contrast with the sight described by Dickens: "What various parasols! What rainbow silks and satins! What pinking of thin silk stockings and pinching of thin shoes, and flutter of ribbons, and silk tassels, and display of rich cloaks, with gaudy hoods and linings!" America was in formation; pigs and satin went side by side. But Dickens pays a tribute to the good dressing and general superiority in health of the American girl of 1841 compared with the "careless, moping, slatternly, degraded" English type. This sounds unfair, but Dickens was

comparing industrial pioneers with English girls crushed and befouled by a factory system without pity. Incidentally, he paid tribute to the courtesy of Americans to their women.

Also Dickens had very little information, and did not know what progress America had made between, let us say, 1820 and his journey to the United States in 1841. The fate of women in America was in 1820 much what it was in Europe. They worked as long as fifteen hours a day; they had to be at the mills at half-past four in the morning; if they did not produce enough the overseer beat them with a whip. There was no public education; indeed, in 1830 a Philadelphia labour paper stated that in some of the factories less than one out of six boys and girls could read and write. So the European tragedy neighbours the American tragedy. There is no reason why it should have been otherwise.

V.—Respectability

Respectability was not invented by the nineteenth century; we find the idea in the eighteenth-century novels of Fielding and Smollett; the characters are not respectable, but

they are conscious of the fact, which is a way of paying tribute to respectability. Dr. Johnson was highly respectable. In the eighteenth century the moral ideas which rose out of Protestantism and Jansenism were beginning to grow, but they did not develop into a bushy harbour capable of excluding all light until round about 1830.

Respectability did not develop faster because it did not arise solely from ideas; it arose also out of a new fact: the industrial revolution provoked by steam. Men and women became respectable because Denis Papin happened to notice that when the kettle boiled the steam raised the lid. In the eighteenth century the middle class did not exist to the extent which we know to-day. Above all others stood the nobility; below that a generation of squires, in Virginia and the South, as well as in Europe; then came the yeomanry (that is to say, small owner-farmers), small manufacturers employing a few workmen, and some merchants employing a few clerks; still below came the labouring masses, most of them practically slaves. But such a division may be excessive in delicacy; in fact, about the beginning of the eighteenth century, though these classes existed, there

were in reality only two classes : the nobles and the rest. In general, the nobles did not marry the daughters of the inferior class. The exceptions are chronicled in genealogies and looked upon as unworthily romantic. Commonly, a workman married his employer's daughter and followed him; the daughter of the merchant often married the clerk. As the eighteenth century progressed, conditions changed. Great fortunes were made in Virginia, Georgia, Louisiana, the West Indies, British India. A new class arose, the rich merchant or banker, who compared with the rich merchant of Venice, Bremen, or Winchelsea, from the twelfth to the fifteenth centuries. The daughters married into the nobility, but that did not blend the classes. The girls were merely absorbed, and trade remained contemptible. At the time of the American Revolution a gentleman, whether English, French, or German, would naturally follow only the profession of arms; he might enter the law through the court, but only by the way; in the same manner he would enter politics; he might enter the Church, but only as a means to career. Trade he could not touch without being defiled. A gentleman might seek money *through* power, but not money first of all. The

rest of mankind, which stood beyond the gentleman class, stood there until the arrival of steam.

Steam re-made the world in creating the factories, for gentle blood stokes no boilers. A demand arose for technically trained people, engineers, draughtsmen, surveyors, architects. The gentleman class could not supply them; they came out of the labouring class, which began to pursue an education that might be profitable. Then goods had to be marketed: this made a demand for accountants, cashiers, salesmen, storekeepers, etc. This, too, offered opportunities to the labouring class. The movement originated about 1780; by 1830 it had risen to great proportions. A new class found itself created, composed of people of vulgar extraction, yet people much better educated than the aristocracy. That was the middle class. This class did not at once become conscious of itself; though all over Europe it fiercely agitated for electoral rights, its mind stayed slavish: right up to 1880 or so, the middle class truckled to blood in the most repulsive way, but it had become conscious enough to create a new morality.

The middle class, so recently born, instinctively realized that the aristocrats were living broad, licentious lives, and that the poor were

living gross, licentious lives. So recently promoted from among the poor, they determined to be unlike them. Still full of admiration for the aristocrats they did not dare to be like them. Thus they became moral by a process of elimination. It was the only thing they could be. Thus was set up the great god of respectability, composed as follows : the man held that work was a good thing, and therefore dignified the worker, provided that he did not work with his hands. (Respect for manual labour was to come much later.) He thought thrift a cardinal virtue. He considered that the more money a man amassed the higher he rose in virtue. He believed in the survival of the fittest many years before the invention of the phrase. He held in great respect his commercial honour; he met his engagements, and kept his contracts. He felt no mercy for the poor; they were under because they were under; because they were under, they deserved to be under. He believed in education for his children, because that would enable them to make money and attain power. He disliked Government interference, because this might prevent him from making money. He was somewhat chaster than had been his great-grandfather, but he affected a higher level of pro-

priety than he could justify, because he saw that it would not do to allow the poor to feel for him anything but respect. He was against all new ideas in the field of sociology, religion, and philosophy. He was, however, not absolutely opposed to new ideas in the domain of science. This because scientific ideas made money, while sociological ideas made only disturbance. He was honest, cleanly, God-fearing, inclined to rule harshly, but not always ungenerously. He was somewhat akin to the Puritans. He was a dull man, but he was not a small man, not a contemptible man.

As for the woman of the period she was the natural subordinate to which we have alluded in the section on marriage. She was highly uneducated. The education of chivalry having disappeared, and no schools of value having been created, she was taught, apart from cooking, only accomplishments, such as drawing, singing, playing the piano, etc. Attempts were made to educate her a little more in history and general topics through a once famous book by Mrs. Mangnall, entitled *Historical and Miscellaneous Questions for the Use of Young People*. This book was used by governesses, namely, decayed spinsters, in a great state of humility and titter.

Its value was defined by an English wit, who called it *Mrs. Mangled's Questions*. The woman's mind was certainly mangled by a strange, crushing system composed mostly of "thou shalt nots." She must not seek the society of men, nor isolate herself with a man who had no "intentions"; she must not practise field sports; she must attend religious services, and never discuss them; she must avoid in conversation topics such as politics, babies, or the faith, because they might cause awkwardness; she must entertain those who entertained her, and none others; she must listen to her husband, and answer when questioned. In other words, she was carefully stifled. The archness, the gaiety of the Elizabethan period had become repulsive to the sober, heavy men of the early nineteenth century. Men no longer said to Anthea: "Bid me to live, and I will live, Thy protestant to be"; they were more inclined to say: "I bid thee cook, *my faithful Jane*, my protestant art thou." And the woman who so comported herself was called respectable.

The writer has no space to develop further this aspect of the Victorian blight, as he is bound to describe that period; but he cannot resist a few quotations from Thackeray, a brilliant

exponent of all that, in the days of blight, was snobbish, hypocritical, patronizing, and secretly salacious. On the third page of *Vanity Fair* we find the letter that Miss Pinkerton writes to Mrs. Sedley when Amelia leaves school: the opening will suffice:

“MADAM,—After her six years’ residence at the Mall, I have the honour and happiness to present Miss Amelia Sedley to her parents as a young lady not unworthy to occupy a fitting position in their polished and refined circle. . . . In music, in dancing, in orthography, in every variety of embroidery and needlework, she will be found to have realized her friends’ *fondest wishes*. . . . A careful and undeviating use of the backboard, for four hours daily during the next three years, is recommended as necessary to the acquirement of that dignified *deportment and carriage* so requisite for every young lady of *fashion*. . . .”

Thackeray is laughing at Miss Pinkerton, who must have written this letter in 1814. But he did not invent her, nor the backboard which straightened her generation. Naturally, such a young person as Amelia, being thus treated,

grew up in plaster of Paris, because she was a young lady. Becky Sharp escaped because she was no lady. To be a young lady was a terrible thing. She could not be taken seriously; she was a pearl for some man to wear. Thackeray gives us a hint of the treatment of girls on page 320 of *The Adventures of Philip*. It seems that Philip wanted of Charlotte: "A word or two about the weather, a look or two, a squeeze-kin, perhaps, of a little handykin." Further on in the book, on a single page, we find "little" Charlotte, her "little" desk, her "little" letters, her "little" letters again, her "little" letters once more (page 331). All through the book you find that she had a little hand, but also a little heart, and a little head. The first one believes, the second one regrets, the third one is sure of. Could any attitude be more nauseating from a modern point of view?

One gains a clear idea of the atmosphere in which lived the early Victorian girl from a talented novel called *The Family*, by Miss Elinor Mordaunt. In this book we find that woman was always worrying because the furniture was not polished, because crumbs were left about. When dust was left upon the sideboard she wrote the word "dust" with her finger.

Weakly children were given port ; at dinner they had beer, and liquor was freely used. The men bullied their women, swore in their presence, stopped social functions if they disliked them, and disinherited their sons and daughters freely for disobedience. Yet they considered it virtuous to have large families. Small children were petted ; after the age of fifteen they were bullied. In the night nursery a fire was lit, and the window was shut ; but in the living-room there was no fire. When trouble arose in the household those Victorians did not react and seek pleasure ; they developed and enjoyed the agony. Occasionally, they dealt with it by means of texts. Any son or daughter showing signs of artistic fever was put into an office, or sent to stay with an aunt. (The Victorians possessed an aunt class, now extinct, which was used as a gaoler.) The men went to work, and after dinner the women produced a modest imitation of an eastern harem, singing, dancing, and so forth, until told to stop. Sex was never referred to before the young, but no joke was too gross to be exchanged between elders. It was generally held that women looked upon passion as hateful, and upon marriage as an ordeal to which, in the name of religion, they must sub-

mit. If any such subject was broached it was the hostess's duty at once to change the subject. The unmarried mother was looked upon as criminal, and the illegitimate child as a worthy candidate for death. There was talk of the Scarlet Woman, and of the appropriateness of the scarlet letter. The prevailing impulse was moral and pietistic; thus a child for its birthday would be given *The Christian Year*, by Keble, or a book the moral of which explains itself: *Eric, or Little by Little*. The men were often careless of religion, but enforced it upon their women. Woman was practically in pawn, having neither money nor social power. As a summit to the family pile, in the drawing-room stood the man's armchair: it was woman's duty to sit upright.

It is interesting to observe that this state of things prevailed not only in England, in the Victorian Age, but all over Europe. In France, for instance, the country of alleged lightness, we find de Maupassant, in 1887, causing a girl to say: "I am as hungry as a hunter. I shall be ashamed to eat so much before a man." (See *Mont-Oriol*.) Oh! shade of Thackerayan heroine raised by her delicacy over gross masculine appetites! A useful parallel is provided by

the reproof of the Victorian governess to the little girl who remarked that she was in a sweat. The governess said: "My dear child, only animals sweat; men perspire; but young ladies merely glow." Meanwhile, in France, the development of cant and of social lying had reached such a pitch that after the fall of Napoleon histories of France were printed which went on straight from Louis XVI. . . . as if the infamous Revolution had not happened! An idea of the social gentleness of the French at that time can be obtained when we realize that a strange institution was created for the redemption of child offenders. These children were redeemed by being imprisoned in cells where they could not see each other. The density and dullness of Victorian life, of this moral century, is well expressed in *Le Rouge et Le Noir*, where it is stated that novels must not be allowed into the house, because these dangerous books might corrupt the daughters and the servants. A little further on, in the drawing-room of Mme. de Fervaques, the hero observes large blanks upon the pictures. He finds out later that the hostess, thinking the subjects undesirable, has had the pictures corrected . . . in what Stendhal calls "this moral century."

The nineteenth century was indeed moral: in 1867 "Madame Bovary" was prosecuted as indecent, irreligious, and blasphemous; any modern reader who searches this classic for immorality or blasphemy will be disappointed. A number of French booksellers refused to stock *La Maison Tellier*. Even in France they must have had backboards. Here is a quotation from *Le Nabab*, by Alphonse Daudet, 1864: "Paul was talking gently with the handsome old lady, whose features were regular and severe, whose hair was white and piled like hemp on her distaff, and who sat up straight upon her chair, her flat bust tightly clad in a little green shawl, who never in her youth had leant upon a chair-back, who had never sat down in an armchair." So it was in Boston, in Richmond, in Philadelphia. So it was all over the world, when women still knew their station.

And yet time was travelling, urgent, merciless. While discussion was being stifled, ideas were bursting their way into the light. While morals were being maintained by society and the law, morals were being questioned. And while man tried to believe that the earth was flat, Darwin was tracing man from the monkey.

For the nineteenth century was great in spite

of itself. It is so far the greatest century the world has known, far greater than the romantic Elizabethan. It is a century of man's first conquest over ignorance. Consider, indeed, the cohort of talent which arose in the nineteenth century. The names of the great would fill this chapter, and yet another, if all were included. Let us note a few :

Politics: Abraham Lincoln, Bolivar, Disraeli, Gladstone, Gambetta, Thiers, Bismarck, Cavour, Kossuth, Kruger, Li Hung Chang, etc.

History: Mommsen, Lecky, Bryce, Carlyle, Macaulay, Michelet, etc.

Literature: Browning, Swinburne, Tennyson, Thackeray, Dickens, George Eliot, Bernard Shaw, Heine, Hans Andersen, Bjornstjerne, Ibsen, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Walt Whitman, Emerson, Henry James, Poe, Victor Hugo, Flaubert, Lamartine, Anatole France, Hauptmann, Tchekov, Tolstoi, Turgenev, Dostoievsky.

Painting and Sculpture: Manet, Whistler, Rodin, Cézanne, Aubrey Beardsley, Ingres, Degas, Burne-Jones, Turner, Corot.

Science: Crookes, Edison, Röntgen, Darwin, Russell Wallace, Bell, Marconi, George Stephenson, Swan, Cayley, Maxim, Morse, Westinghouse, Wheatstone, Nobel, Welsbach, Diesel.

Music: Wagner, Berlioz, Liszt, Brahms, Schumann.

The most interesting feature about this haphazard list is that almost every one of these great names is that of a man or woman who was opposed to the spirit known as Victorianism. There was no cant in Swinburne, no illusion in Darwin. They were bred in the nineteenth century, warmed by the fermentation of the eighteenth. They made their century great in spite of itself, and it did all it could to crucify them. But instead they crucified their century. History revenges more often than it repeats itself.

CHAPTER VIII

ON THE WAY TO THE FUTURE

I.—Formal Rebellion

THE situation in 1840 did not recall the one which fifty years before confronted Mary Wollstonecraft and the women of the French Revolution. Civilization had taken a notable step by developing industry, and stimulated woman by introducing her into the factories. Though the world still looked upon woman as a subordinate, she herself did not greatly disagree. But already doubt was rising, and a few women were beginning to suggest that the right to own property and the right to vote had nothing to do with the Christian faith. Women who held this view were unpopular; they were in the situation occupied to-day in England by the three or four hundred clergymen who are members of the Guild of St. Matthew, and who contend that the fact of holding socialist views has nothing to do with their faith.

In 1835 two English women were elected members of the Royal Astronomical Society. In 1847 Anne Knight produced a pamphlet demanding votes for women. The exclusion of women at the Anti-Slavery Congress, which has already been referred to, and the first women's conference, in 1848, in America, helped to stir the woman question. Absurd as it may seem, the brilliant organizing capacity of Florence Nightingale in the Crimean War revealed to many men a fact of which they had hitherto been unaware: women had brains. There was a general stirring, a discontent among women. In the 'sixties there were in England no women's clubs, but little social groups of agitators began to form. Besides, not only women, but men were stirring in the great year 1848, when in France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, the struggle for political liberty reached its intense point. Besides, the agitation went on: if the reader has an impression that the 'fifties and 'sixties were dull, let him set it aside. Religious, political, social systems, everything was being questioned. Naturally, woman, emerging from slavery, was deeply stirred. Finally, in 1867, came a great shock to masculine self-complacency: John Stuart Mill put forward

in the British Parliament the first proposal to admit women to the political franchise. Mill was defeated: but two years later Englishwomen were given the right to vote in minor municipal elections, while the State of Wyoming earned for itself the everlasting glory of being the first to admit women to vote for its legislature. One year later, in England, when the Compulsory Education Act was passed, women were allowed to vote for the members of the school boards, and even to be themselves elected.

These seem small successes, but the enfranchising fire was catching in all directions. In the latter half of the nineteenth century a number of brilliant women, such as Mrs. Fawcett, Mrs. Chapman Catt, Miss Ellen Key, Miss Selma Lagerlöf, Miss Jane Addams, and hundreds more, began to inflame the world with their demand for absolute feminine equality. Thus, in 1893, Colorado gave women the franchise. Then came New Zealand and Southern Australia, a number of American States and other British colonies. But old Europe was the last to fall: only in 1907 did Finland, and in 1908 Norway, give women political rights equal to those of men. The reader will imagine that these successes were not

easily earned. Continually the women faced lampoons, newspaper articles, and music-hall songs bidding them "Go home and mind the baby." Some made themselves ridiculous by advocating rational dress and appearing in breeches. The collar, the eyeglass, hair cut in masculine ways—these absurdities of 1880 did a great deal to retard the movement, for it took a long time to make men realize that the feminine sex contained a percentage of fools equal to the percentage achieved by the masculine sex, and to realize that if masculine fools were allowed to vote, it was only fair to redress the balance by admitting feminine imbeciles.

It is not surprising, however, that these childish things were done when we recall that the first English woman's paper was founded as recently as 1858; that even in 1867 a British Royal Commission, inquiring into British education, was not commissioned to examine girls' schools: they were not considered important enough. Indeed, though several fairly good girls' schools were established in England in 1843, it was not until 1858 that the famous Cheltenham was created to replace the titters of the governesses. The fine side of Cheltenham, which America could produce long before

Europe, was the fight that Miss Beale delivered against accomplishments, against the feeble drawing and the feeble music of the Victorian age. Miss Beale set out to make women; it was the descendants of those women later broke all barriers. One of the slow results was to destroy the old maid. She still exists to-day, but she is generally about fifty; the unmarried woman of thirty is generally just an unmarried woman, and we may hope she will so stay.

One reason is that the struggling women of the nineteenth century began to break their way into the professions. An alternative to marriage, a bad alternative, but still something, was provided when Elizabeth Garrett became an apothecary, and when at last, in 1869, Miss Jex-Blake demanded a medical degree at Edinburgh. A modern reader can hardly believe it, but in those days society held the point of view that it was indecent to instruct a woman in medicine and surgery. For two years the struggle raged; the medical faculty excluded women from lectures; an enlightened faculty, which admitted them, refused to present women with the prizes they had won. Finally, the British Court of Appeal excluded women from medical courses; the British Medical Association excluded women

in 1877. But the struggle went on by meeting and newspaper; man was repeatedly asked to explain why a woman who could take the examination should not have her degree. At last, in 1888 . . . within the short life of any man who is to-day a captain in the army, Mrs. Scharlieb was given a medical degree. These details are quoted in full to provide a graphic picture of what woman had to break down before she was allowed to earn a living.

The reader should not conclude, however, that the darkness soon passed away. Great conquests were being made in America, where, much earlier than in Europe, women were being allowed to practise medicine and the law. Everything that was given to women was given reluctantly, and only when the most commonplace people were shamed into confessing that women could not be kept out. For instance, in England, Lady Sandhurst, in 1889, was elected as a London County Councillor by Brixton. The defeated male candidate brought the case before a court: Lady Sandhurst was turned out. In the universities it was the same thing. Edinburgh did not open its classes to women before 1867. The University of Oxford admitted women, but refused them degrees until

after the War. And at the time of writing, in 1925, the University of Cambridge, which has at last been battered and ridiculed into granting degrees to women, still refuses them the right to vote at the meetings of men who hold the same degrees.

On the Continent the struggle was similar, but peculiar. For instance, in France, the first woman barrister was admitted in 1903, nearly twenty years earlier than in England. Yet to this day the French refuse women a political vote, not only in the French legislature, but even at town meetings and parish elections. All over the Latin countries the position of woman remains low. Dark as was England, she has always been more liberal to women. Perhaps the truth is that England is not liberal, but that she can be worried into action. That is a question of national psychology into which the writer cannot enter.

II.—Masculine Allies

The reader may conclude from the foregoing that women waged against men a lonely battle for civil and political freedom. That is, however, not entirely the case. Since the nineteenth

century was a great period of ideas, since liberty, evolution, free-thinking, were the topics of the day, it was impossible that the men who originated these ideas should hold towards woman the dark thoughts of the past. Or, at least, their disciples were affected. Darwin, for instance, did not concern himself with the woman problem, but as he proceeded, with Russell Wallace, to shatter the old conception of the origin of man, he encouraged debate, he developed minds, and some of these naturally travelled towards the question of the equality of the sexes. Men who had not the slightest desire to raise the position of women, such as Herbert Spencer and Nietzsche, by stirring minds turned some towards liberal ideas. All progress in intellect was progress for women. The suppression of slavery by the British in 1807, and its severe repression throughout the century; its suppression by America after the Civil War; the agitations of 1848—these actions formed part of the great movement for freeing all that lives; it connects even with the creation in 1825 of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals: at that time there was no society for the prevention of cruelty to women.

But taking the particular, one may say that

three men did more to release women than most men and women combined : John Stuart Mill, Ibsen, and Mr. Bernard Shaw.

John Stuart Mill was not the founder of the woman movement, but he was the first man of note and power to formulate philosophically the opinion that woman is unjustly tyrannized over by man. His famous essay, "The Subjection of Women," published in 1869, is the basis of the modern suffrage movement. Here are some of the phrases of Mill : "The principle which regulates the existing social relations between the two sexes—the legal subordination of one sex to the other—is wrong in itself and one of the chief hindrances to human improvement." But he is not sentimental ; one feels that he blames woman for asserting herself too little ; he considers that most of what women write about women is merely flattery destined for man. He is shocked by Mme. de Staël when she writes : "A man can defy public opinion ; a woman must submit to it." He objects to the idea that woman must obey man ; he protests against the transfer of property to the husband ; he describes as slavery the position of the wife ; he shows with indignation that man controls the woman's child, that after his death, even, she may not be her

own child's guardian. He considers that the legal equality of married persons "is the only means of rendering the daily life of mankind a school of moral cultivation." He is passionately in favour of equal suffrage for both sexes; he argues for the opening of all public offices to women, and he supports this by showing woman's matchless capacity for dealing with details and leaving general ideas alone. Mill places the woman question in the realm of pure thought. The central idea of his work is that it is unjust to subordinate women, and that all things unjust make an evil society. This may seem to the reader so obvious as to be below notice; it is to-day so evident to most of us that ability has no sex that Mill's points of view may fail to impress. But that which is commonplace to-day was revolutionary in 1869. The main value of Mill's action was two-fold. It placed the woman problem on an argumentative basis; it lifted the question out of the field of emotion and compelled judgment to compare mind with mind instead of long hair with moustaches. The second part of Mill's action is the practical. It was useful to agitate; it was better to legislate. Though Mill failed to obtain the franchise for woman, he dragged the debate out

of meeting halls, magazines, and pamphleteering committees, out of the dusty darkness, into the political arena of a great nation. He showed that the movement was real, thus making for it practical friends, and, still more valuable, aggressive practical enemies. He advertised woman's rights.

The action of Mill had powerful effects on America, where he was held in high esteem; but it was an action of a peculiar kind; it was not popular. Round about 1870 there was no "yellow" Press, so that mankind was deprived of one of the most potent forces for its betterment. The "yellow" Press is misjudged; often childish, sometimes malicious, stressing trifles and ignoring much that is lofty, it has a great quality: vitality. If in 1870 there had been a yellow Press it would have fastened upon the woman's movement, poured upon it floods of ridicule, held it up daily to caricature. Thus it would have made the success of the woman's movement by advertising it to persons whom Mill could not touch. He forced the problem upon the politicians, a few lawyers, the Church, and the solid people who read *The Times*, but the masses of the middle class, who made up public opinion, he could not stir. Those people

could be attacked only through the novel and the play. On the whole the novel was ineffective; a few books, such as *The Woman Who Did* and *Marcella*, created debate, but it was not until 1900 that the novel became significant. Meanwhile the play was recruiting Hauptmann, Mr. Bernard Shaw, Dumas Junior, Strindberg, and, greatest of them, Ibsen.

It is difficult to-day to realize Ibsen. Until he came the theatre had shown men and women in their ordinary relations; it exhibited good men and bad men, but man always kept woman in her place. There were no rebels; it pictured women noble or vile only within the limits of their sphere. Suddenly Ibsen put forward the idea that women had rights *similar* to those of men. No longer was the demand for kindness, for special rights, but for equal rights. Most of Ibsen's plays are, from the woman's point of view, revolutionary. He was the first to criticize marriage on the stage and to show that from a woman's point of view it may not be satisfactory. Ibsen did this in a possibly rather unfair way, by creating a gallery of husbands of the most objectionable and imbecile character. Very subtly he gave up the old type of husband, domineering, unfaithful, and selfish;

he began to create inept husbands. Thus, in *Hedda Gabler* he makes the husband a creature that fusses with papers, receives news by "Fancy that!" and is surprised that a woman should have the courage to commit suicide. As he puts it, "People don't do these things." In *The Wild Duck* the husband is a vain idiot who sleeps every afternoon on the sofa, and pretends to himself that he is working on a great invention; he likes his family to fawn upon him, taking this as a recognition of his superiority: he completely collapses when truth is laid before him. In *The Doll's House* the husband is one of those trying, self-complacent men, who calls his wife "a little skylark," and thinks that the grimy facts of this life are unsuitable for her little ears. On slight provocation, however, he thinks the worst of her. Ibsen created women whom he thought fine, but he did much more damage to the anti-suffrage cause by exhibiting the imbecility of the male.

Of all his plays, from our point of view, *The Doll's House* is the most important. Nora, to obtain money to take her consumptive husband abroad, had forged a document. Thus she has saved his life. But the document falls into the hands of a blackmailer, and the husband dis-

covers the truth. At once he assumes the worst, that she is a criminal or a fool; he does not question her, seek out her motives; he is not thinking of her but of himself, what *he* is to do, how *his* position will be affected, what will be said of *him*. Nora realizes that she has never counted, that she has never been more than a pleasure, a toy. Her nature changes, and in a few minutes she grows old as she revolts against her status, which is that of a child: "When I was at home with papa he told me his opinions and if I differed from him I concealed the fact because he would not have liked it." "He called me his doll child, and he played with me just as I used to play with my dolls. And when I came to live with you . . . I was simply transferred from papa's hands into yours. You arrange everything according to your own taste, and so I get the same tastes as you—or else I pretend to, I'm not quite sure which." In another place she says: "We have never sat down in earnest together to try to get at the bottom of anything." Then she realizes what she must do: "I must try and educate myself. You are not the man to help me in that. I must do that for myself. I must stand quite alone if I am to understand myself and everything about

me." Then she says something fatal : " I don't believe any longer that before all else I am a wife and a mother. I believe that before all else I am a reasonable human being, just as you are—or, at all events, that I must try to become one. I know quite well, Torvald, that most people would think you right and that views of that kind are to be found in books ; but I can no longer content myself with what most people say, or with what is found in books. I must think things for myself and get to understand them." It does not need a great effort of the imagination to realize the effect of such phrases in 1879. At the end, the play is still more striking : Nora leaves her husband and her children, shutting the door behind her. One feels that as that sound was heard woman was leaving behind her many scores of centuries.

Last of the great three comes Mr. Bernard Shaw. He is not primarily an advocate of woman's rights ; he is primarily an advocate of socialist rearrangements and of general ideas ; it is along this road that he travels towards a plea for the emancipation of women. On the other hand he is without illusions, so realizes woman as an animal rather akin to a beast of prey. He

sees the contact between the sexes without taking a side in it, except in so far as he laughs at both combatants. What matters is that Mr. Shaw faces things as he sees them, that pity and tradition count for nothing. Consider, for instance, the following extract from the preface of *Man and Superman* when he controverts the common idea that man attacks and woman submits :

“ The pretence that women do not take the initiative is part of the farce. Why, the whole world is strewn with snares, traps, gins, and pitfalls for the capture of men by women. Give women the vote, and in five years there will be a crushing tax on bachelors. Men, on the other hand, attach penalties to marriage, depriving women of property, of the franchise, of the free use of their limbs, of the ancient symbol of immortality, the right to make oneself at home in the house of God by taking off the hat—of everything that he can force woman to dispense with without compelling himself to dispense with her. All in vain. Woman must marry because the race must perish without her travail ; if the risk of death and the certainty of pain, danger, and unutterable discomforts cannot deter her,

slavery and swaddled ankles will not. And yet we assume that the force that carries women through all these perils and hardships stops abashed before the primnesses of our behaviour for young ladies. It is assumed that the woman must wait, motionless, until she is wooed. Nay, she often does wait motionless. This is how the spider waits for the fly."

The value of such writing is "light, more light." Thus, away with sentiment about woman. Ann, the heroine of *Man and Superman*, is, like Major Barbara, the woman who takes; the heroine of *Captain Brassbound's Conversion* is the woman who manœuvres. No Bernard Shaw woman is a typical rebel in the Ibsenian sense, but all through his plays we find women endowed with energy, logic, and courage; like Ibsen, he upholds woman by attacking man, except that he thinks him less inept and more disagreeable. For woman, the value of Mr. Bernard Shaw lies in the immense intellectual agitation which was raised by his works among the young people, in England and Germany especially, between the years 1885 and 1905. He criticizes marriage, medicine, the law, love, religion, and by so doing he helps woman: by

making woman discuss, he helps to make her invincible.

The world did not, of course, swiftly throw off the effects of the Victorian blight. Social life from 1880 to 1890 was a heavy affair, of which some ideas can be gained from the novels of George Gissing, Harold Frederick, and Henry James. Narrow ceremony defined social relations; the dinner-party of twelve to twenty guests, followed by whist, defined entertainment; only those who gave dinners received them, except perhaps marriageable men, who gave themselves. Woman was still enslaved by the home; in every class the house rather than the flat represented the family; there woman struggled with bad grates, bad lighting, and in the end bad servants. Also, as woman was growing educated, there arose conflicts between husband and wife; woman rebelled against conjugal authority, and took to cigarettes or "The Yellow Book" as a protest. She was still supposed to avoid delicate subjects. To show her independence she selected them for discussion; still able to feel shocked, she decided to shock. In 1885 the world was heavy with conflict, with the merciless struggle for freedom that was to come to fruition thirty years later. In a

sense, the world was duller in 1885 than in 1865; costume was hideous; the hotels were about to kill the clubs without replacing them; in London and in New York religion was being questioned, while ethics were not yet adopted. The struggle took place underground, in the Pioneer Club, and especially in the best bedroom, where Mrs. Caudle reproached her husband without quite knowing for what crime. In fact, she was reproaching him for having married her, though she would have been very unhappy if she had remained unwed.

But time went swiftly; with 1890 the social life of Western Europe was stimulated by the arts; it became exciting. That period compares almost exactly with the great intellectual agitation which began in America round about 1910, and has now produced the play and the novel of revolt. Europe was just shedding side whiskers, and out of youth came a strong demand that ideas also should at once be shaved. The French inspiration of realism was coming in great gusts from de Maupassant and Zola. Soon the Dreyfus case was to convulse the whole world, make it doubt the word of generals and the discretion of priests. It was a period of magnificent intellectual activity, when it was possible

at last to pronounce the words "free love" or "socialism" without being excluded from human society. Burgomasters were laughing at artists, and preachers were pronouncing serious sermons over *Robert Elsmere*. They little knew!

III.—*Militancy*

It is tragic to record in the present history that more was done by violence in thirteen years than had been achieved by reason during a hundred; that Ibsen, Stuart Mill, Haeckel, and Darwin between them could not achieve for women what was achieved by the first Lancashire mill-hand who set fire to a pillar-box. Votes for women were not gained by reason. The first act of militancy took place in 1905, at a time when no European country accorded women the vote, when hardly anybody knew or cared what suffrage meant. It is tragic and disgusting that within a few years Norway, the best-educated nation in Europe, Finland, itself so much oppressed, the house of liberalism called England, and at last practical America, surrendered to the women. Men had resisted

argument; they gave way to nagging and to noise.

We can say to the glory of English women that it was they who broke the masculine ring. In 1905 two members of the Women's Social and Political Union, a society headed by Mrs. and Miss Christabel Pankhurst, rose in a political meeting and audaciously demanded of the liberal speaker whether he was prepared to introduce a Bill giving the suffrage to English women. He replied by something non-committal. Nothing more happened. Then, to the amazement of England, at every political meeting women began to appear, always putting the same question. At first they were laughed at. Then they began to interrupt. Little by little the question ceased to be put, and the cry of "Votes for Women" became a means of obstruction. In 1906 a number of women attempted to rush the House of Commons, and were arrested. Twice in the month of December the attack was resumed. Demonstrations in great masses, and new attacks upon the House of Commons, were met by mounted police and numerous arrests. Attempting to see the British Prime Minister women chained themselves to the railings of his house, where, until

the chains could be cut, they remained shouting their monotonous cry. Then they picketed the British Parliament, standing night and day in all weathers, and throwing at each member a look of reproach.

Their campaign was met by violence, by ejection from meetings, by insults, and in a few cases by assaults. Monotonously, the Government went on arresting: the only effect was to fill the chest of the suffragists with money, to fill its ranks with girls of fifteen, married women with half a dozen children, and women so old that one had to be wheeled to the House of Commons and lifted out.

The British Government was disturbed, but it did not realize what women were capable of. Seeing that the ordinary protests were useless, the suffragists promoted a campaign of violence. A number of churches were set on fire; tar was poured into letter-boxes; thousands of windows were broken in the London stores; one heroic woman, Emily Davison, struck at the heart of England by rushing across the course on Derby Day and stopping one of the horses. She was killed, and England was more shocked than it would have been by the burning of Westminster Abbey. The comment of one man is historic:

“She might have hurt the horse.” But now the Government found itself unable to punish, because the hunger strike was introduced. The police could arrest the women, but these could refuse food. The Government realized that if it let them die a sentimental fit of fury would sweep the country; so it fed them forcibly by tubes through the nostrils. Public opinion was impressed, and woman’s suffrage became the special subject. There was nothing that women would not do, would not suffer. The agony of forcible feeding, the suicide of the girl Grey, raised the women’s ardour to fever point, caused them to crowd forward, begging for martyrdom. The British Government did not know how to give in; it did not like to give way to violence, any more than did the American Government, in spite of the continual riots at Washington. The false pride of these Governments was saved by the war, which provided another violence, and enabled the suffragists to make a great gesture, to declare that they would do nothing to impede the waging of the war.

But, strangely enough, it was war released them. The arming in Europe and America of over twenty million men aged from twenty to forty, flung the industrial system into such a

state of disorder that women had to be recruited for every trade. In England, about four million women were employed in unexpected occupations : steel forging, mining, driving post-office carts, working lifts, carrying burdens ; they entered not only the European civil services, but even the banks, those spots almost as sacred to men as their temples. The phrase went round that the women were splendid ; a number of nurses were killed, and, idiotic as the argument was, out of their blood sprang the seed of political equality. The shooting of Nurse Cavell helped women to power, as if the world had not long known women full of gallantry. Thus, as soon as the war was done the instinct of self-preservation, which is so strong in governments, made London and Washington realize that if they did not act, act at once, the suffrage campaign would begin again, and that it would then be too late to eat the fine sentiments they had indulged in during the war. So the Governments flung themselves upon the splendour of the women, which they had discovered within four years, the previous six thousand having proved inadequate ; the war had not been done six weeks before English women were enfranchised ; soon American women followed.

IV.—The Present and the Future

It is easy to harbour illusions as to the position of woman to-day. If we compare this position with what it was in London or Boston fifty years ago we naturally say that it has been revolutionized. We find in America, Great Britain, France, Norway, Denmark, Holland, Switzerland, Germany, Russia, that woman has been approximately equalized with man. There exist differences between the system of these various countries, for in some women have not yet political power, while in others they may not fill this function or that. But on the whole, in America and a large part of Europe, woman is given a more or less great share in government; she may practise the law, medicine, pharmacy, accountancy, architecture, etc.; she has entered business on a moderate scale, and a certain number of important positions are in her hands. But we must recall that a large proportion of the world is, from woman's point of view, in a state of darkness. In the so-called intellectual France woman cannot vote; in Portugal, Spain, Italy, Jugo-Slavia, Hungary, the whole of the Balkans,

the whole of Asia, most of Africa, the whole of South America, and most of Central America, she is definitely an inferior. Not only is she refused a vote, but in most cases the marriage and divorce laws are very oppressive to her; her position in business is restricted, and always low. Viewing the world as a whole, one may say that only one woman out of six has been liberated to the moderate extent we know.

Moreover, in the countries where woman has been liberated, one may doubt whether the liberation is complete. A great deal of the ground won during the war has been lost by women. Most of the posts that women gained were taken from them when the soldiers returned, which was just; but in cases where the places of dead men had to be filled the vacancies were given not to women, but to men. Thus a great body of unemployed women was created. Competing as they must for wages, they have brought down the wages of women. To-day, women would have a harder struggle for life than have men if it were not that their standard of living is lower. It cannot be denied that many important positions belong to women; the United States supplies the instance of an Assistant Attorney-General, and several

instances where women have been chosen as State attorney; America has a certain number of female judges; England has chosen a woman as Assistant National Health Commissioner; a number of women occupy highly paid positions in business. But this must not blind us to the fact that if we consider each rank in the professions, in business, or in the public services, we find rather less than one woman on an equality with every twenty-seven men. The reader will imagine, therefore, what extraordinary capacity a woman must still show to obtain, not superior, but merely equal rank. It is only fair to say that woman does not as a rule, exhibit this capacity, and that she is still suffering from the subordination which was enforced upon her during so many centuries. Therefore, the future of woman resides not so much in revolt as in actual training, in the fitting of the female sex for the positions to which it aspires.

In Western Europe this is taking place to a certain extent, but it is in America that the development of female education has risen to an extraordinary degree. For instance, in the Universities and colleges, according to the latest returns, there are two hundred and twenty-four thousand male students, and one hundred and

fifty-two thousand female. This is an astounding situation, and naturally it will have its effect. The world cannot with impunity educate women on such a scale, and it must thereby be compelled to give them by degrees a larger share of power. The hope lies with America rather than with Europe, because young America is older in feminine education. In 1852, when England was excluding women from its universities, American women already had two sororities, associations of graduates, both in Georgia. But American example becomes every day more vivid, and every day more vital. It is interesting to note that at the beginning of 1925 one can find in the United States eight and a half million female workers, that there are in the whole of America only thirty-three occupations which employ no women. At the moment America has a little over nine thousand women doctors and dentists, over one thousand seven hundred lawyers, and nearly one thousand eight hundred clergywomen.

One may also note with satisfaction the great improvement in the physical condition of woman. Much of her subordination in the past, her rheumatism, bad teeth, and special diseases, were due to her exclusion from athletics. It is an

illusion to think that even English women were readily admitted to field sports in the past. Sixty years ago women did not play hockey or lawn tennis; it is unlikely that they played golf; when the bicycle became fashionable, it was thought immodest that a woman should use the new machine; only of late years have women been allowed to do away with the side saddle. American women have been playing games for probably less than thirty years; Frenchwomen for only about twenty-five years. (A number of virile and athletic women have, of course, played games at all times, but games have been played by women on a large scale for not more than forty years, if as long.)

The new addiction of women to games is an indication of revolt, an attempt to achieve equality in the field, as they are achieving it in the mind. Of this revolt we find traces, not only in the darker parts of Europe, but also in the harems of Turkey and India. When the Chinese Empire fell, one of the women's first acts was to unbind their feet. Nothing could have been more symbolic. In the Turkish harems women are still confined, but are reading, not only French novels, but also solid works. They are wretched, shut off from the modern

movement of freedom and of ideas, like monkeys trained to tricks, but kept enchained. Mr. Pierre Loti has perfectly expressed them in his novel *Les Désenchantées*. Revolt is there; the Turkish women are asking release; in Japan women are joining the socialist party. The future of women is a future of revolt, and a future of conquest.

In a work such as this, it would be imprudent to offer any outline of what the future reserves for women, because this depends upon the common social organization. We may expect that in another hundred years the world will be more closely regulated and ordered than it is to-day; we may expect that education will be immensely superior to what it is to-day. We have no reason to think that woman will lose the position she has achieved, and we have no reason to think that she will then stand absolutely equal with man. Indeed, it seems unlikely. All we may look forward to is to a considerable broadening of woman's opportunities; women may then occupy many seats in the legislatures, and possibly in the cabinets; we do not know; all we know is that progress will be very slow because the prejudice of man against woman cannot in a hundred years be wiped out,

given that it was created in a hundred thousand. We may expect that the marriage bond will be comparatively lax, that the State will more and more supplant the family in the care of the child ; we do not know. We know only that the theological imperatives are not to-day as strong as they were, and we may think that they are growing weaker. We may expect a political tightening of the public, and a social slackening of the individual, relations. That is about as far as a prudent observer can go. But of one thing the writer is convinced : there recurs to his mind the picture of the Chinese women taking from their feet the swaddling bands imposed upon them by the centuries. There cling to-day about women's feet many swaddling bands : he is sure that, though in the days that approach woman thus hampered may still trip slowly, no period which now lies in the womb of time will find the strength or the desire to add new bands to woman's feet, as she pursues her unknown course into the future.

BIBLIOGRAPHY.

The following list is not merely intended to state the titles of the authorities consulted by the writer; many of these are omitted. It is proposed, rather, to indicate the works that may profitably be read by a person wishing to study in greater detail the periods reviewed in the present volume.

Section I.—General (All Periods)

- “ The Encyclopedia Britannica.”
- “ A Dictionary of Dates ” (Haydn).
- “ Dictionary of Non-Classical Mythology.”
- “ Chambers’s Encyclopedia.”
- “ The Outline of History ” (H. G. Wells).
- “ The History of Human Marriage ” (E. Westermarck).
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- “ A Short History of the English People ” (J. R.
Green).
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- “ Morals in Evolution ” (L. T. Hobhouse).
- “ Short History of Morals ” (J. M. Robertson).
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